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THE CHURCH FUNCTIONING EFFECTIVELY

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By

O. L. SHELTON

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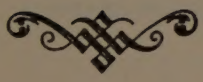

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To

R. E. S.

whose faith and vision have
been an inspiration and a challenge
and whose companionship has been
constant strength

INTRODUCTION

COMMUNIONS which have a congregational polity do not as a rule provide their local churches with a fixed pattern of organization. The result is that each church is organized as local wisdom or fancy dictates. Some communions—the Disciples of Christ being one—have held that the pattern of local church organization is to be found in the New Testament. And it is true that the New Testament does make certain references to the organizational pattern of the early church, but it is also true that nowhere is there to be found what might be called an *organizational blueprint* which was divinely intended for use by a modern congregation with its complex program and its multiplicity of auxiliary organizations.

This is as one might expect, the New Testament being a book of principles, not a handbook of detailed instructions. If, therefore, a communion has no ecclesiastical authority to hand down a pattern of organization to its local churches, it becomes necessary for each congregation to take the principles of the New Testament and work out as best it can its own organizational structure. Too frequently congregations when faced with this necessity have considered organization unimportant and so have simply adopted a traditional pattern which grew up when church life was much more simple than it is today.

This book reflects the rich experience and the seasoned judgment of a minister who has successfully served several outstanding congregations and who has demonstrated in his ministry a genius for sound organizational and administrative procedure. Dr. Shelton does not write theoretically, but rather as a reporter, a reporter who sets forth plans and procedures which he has validated throughout his ministry.

Beginning, as he does, with a review of how the organizational life of the New Testament church took shape, Dr. Shelton

lays a broad foundation of principle upon which an organizational superstructure may be reared in the church today. The reader of this volume will do well to digest carefully the earlier chapters of the book before moving into the more practical and concrete later chapters, for in the earlier chapters one finds the author's *philosophy* of organization set forth, a philosophy which it is necessary for the reader to comprehend if he is to interpret correctly and utilize the more concrete plans to be found in the latter part of the book.

This volume grew out of the conviction on the part of the Committee on Local Church Life of the Home and State Missions Planning Council of the Disciples of Christ that there was need for a new and comprehensive treatment of the subject of local church organization and administration. Because of his reputation in this particular field, the committee turned unanimously for authorship to O. L. Shelton, at the time pastor of the great Independence Boulevard Christian Church, Kansas City, Missouri. During the writing of the book the members of the Committee on Local Church Life had the privilege of critically reviewing the author's manuscript, as did also leaders in the field of religious education. The book in outline form was also used by the author on several occasions as the basis of a series of lectures to ministers' groups and adult conference classes. Few books reflect corporate thinking to a greater degree than does this one, and yet, in a very real sense, the volume is still the author's own.

As this book is sent forth it is, we are sure, the author's hope, as well as the hope of those who encouraged him to write it, that it may be the means of blessing many local churches by bringing to them more effective organization and more efficient administrative procedure, to the end that a richer fruitage may result for the Kingdom of God.

WILLARD M. WICKIZER.

FOREWORD

SO MANY people have had a part in the writing of this book that it would be very difficult to acknowledge the contributions made by any person or group of persons. Certainly there is deep appreciation due to the membership of three church boards whose cooperative spirit enabled the minister to plan and try, and plan and try again. On the church boards of First Christian Church, Ponca City, Oklahoma, First Christian Church, Wichita Falls, Texas, and Independence Boulevard Christian Church, Kansas City, Missouri, there was a total of 280 men and women. They entered heartily into a program of study, discussion of their tasks, and making plans to bring about desired results. In the scores of committee meetings the philosophy and procedure portrayed in this book came to guide the planning. It is to this splendid group of earnest, consecrated men and women who weighed, analyzed, and evaluated the plans suggested and helped to work them through to achievement that greatest appreciation is due. That is the first acknowledgment.

Further, in five adult conferences, classes have discussed and evaluated much of the subject matter of this book. It has been an informal and frank discussion, with the members of church boards, church school leaders, women's council leaders, and pastors making up the groups. The valuable contribution of these splendid groups of church people is gratefully acknowledged.

It has been a pleasure to present parts of the material which finally became the subject matter of this book in ministers' institutes in Oklahoma, Texas, Kansas, and Iowa. The comradeship with these men has been an inspiration and has provided a means of practical evaluation. Their suggestions were most helpful, and many have been incorporated in the material.

The Kansas City Ministerial Alliance of Disciples, and smaller groups of that body, have listened to some of the outlines here presented, and their helpful discussions have been appreciated. The fine spirit that prevails in that group makes their evaluations most helpful.

There is a debt of appreciation to the Local Church Life Committee of the Home and State Missions Planning Council, whose encouragement led to bringing the thinking, planning, and working of the years with church boards and discussions with groups to this final form. Their discussion and evaluation of the contents have been most helpful and are deeply appreciated.

Finally, there is a bibliography at the close of the book, and it is an acknowledgment of contributions made by a host of people whose books have been read across the years. More accurate acknowledgment than that seems to be impossible, but it would be lacking in appreciation to do less.

O. L. SHELTON.

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CHAPTER I

THE UNIQUE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CHURCH

THE organization and administration of the church takes its significance from the unique purpose of the church in the plan of God, the supreme place of the church in the redemption of man, and the dignity of the church as the society of followers of Jesus Christ. The point, therefore, from which one should start in a study of this kind is a recognition of what the church has been in the eternal purpose of God, a sincere appreciation of the value of the church today, and a vision of the destiny of the church in the divine-human relationship.

The church of Jesus Christ is the greatest institution in the world. It is the body of Christ, active and visible in the world, seeking to know his will, doing his work, revealing his heart of compassion, expressing his love and concern, preaching his gospel, building his kingdom in the hearts of men, and radiating his spirit in all human relationships.

This institution is unique in that it belongs to Christ. "Upon this rock I will build my church" (Matt. 16:18). He is the architect and builder. It is "the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). It is his by purchase at the price of the supreme sacrifice. "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it; that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:25-27). It is his by right of love and cleansing. He looks forward to its glorious consummation as worthy of the Son of God. He will claim it as his own—a holy, divine, eternal church.

It began in the year 30 of the present era and has had a continuous history. It has established branches in all lands of the earth, ministering to man's deepest needs and trading in the goods of eternity. It gives inspiration and ideals in all areas of life—social, industrial, economic, governmental, ethical, philosophical, and spiritual. It radiates the spirit of Christ through all man's relationships and has a bearing on all his purposes, motives, and goals. It points men to Him who said, "I am the Way," and leads them into the "abundant life."

The church is a divine institution. It was conceived in the mind of God and nurtured in his thought until, "when the fulness of time came, God sent forth his son" (Gal. 4:4). The foundation for the church as a society among men was laid by the Son of God himself, and it was inaugurated under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It has in it the majesty of God and is made holy by the presence of the Spirit of God, "a habitation of God in the Spirit" (Eph. 2:22). Those who work in the church and plan its program are constantly aware of the fellowship of the Divine and of the touch of holy things.

The church is the "household" of God. It is the tangible, earthly, personal evidence of the spiritual family. It was established that men might possess a spiritual habitation, a home of the soul. It is a constant reminder of the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, and the responsibilities inhering in the ties and kinships of God's great family.

The church is a company of disciples who are students of the Great Teacher and who seek to be schooled in the Way. It is a fellowship of those who wear the uniform of discipleship. Those who form this fellowship have distinctive "features" which mark them, and they honor Christ in these "features." They are willing to bear cheerfully all duties and responsibilities, for in so doing they reflect their devotion to Christ and his cause. They are strong to endure courageously all burdens and sufferings for Christ's sake, for thus they declare the strength of their convictions and the depth of their faith.

The church is a divine business in which there is an intimate partnership. One Partner is the source of unfailing wisdom, the supply of inexhaustible resources, a Companion of enriching personality, and a sharer of overflowing power. The other partner, equally essential to the enterprise, is the source of talent, time, energy, money, and personality. Guided by the mind and spirit of the Senior Partner, this junior partner serves as steward of all the stock of the church and is the administrator of its affairs. The success of the business will depend upon the energy, the integrity, and the vision of the junior partner. The Senior Partner never fails. His resources and his eagerness are never lacking.

The church has been the depository of civilization's greatest heritage and the guardian of humanity's highest ideals and aspirations. Time after time, when the world had sunk into a dark period, it was the church that conserved the gains of civilization and transmitted them to those who were to be the leaders of a new day. And on occasions without number the church has faithfully guarded the ideals of men against attack by secular forces. The church has been the conscience of the world, bringing an increasing sensitiveness regarding the ills of the social order and higher conceptions of the purposes of government and other organized expressions of society. Further than this, the church has been bringing an increasing awareness of the moral structure of the universe, pointing constantly to God, whose fatherly love is at the center of the world and whose moral laws judge all the activities and relationships of men.

The church represents life-giving realities. In the midst of the variable, the transient, the unstable, men turn to it for certainty, security, and a sense of the abiding and eternal. The church is the witness to the eternal truths of the universe—the truth about God and his purpose in history, the truth about Christ and his achievement which brings "good news" to the hearts of men, the truth about man and his possibilities in the family of God and his destiny in the eternal plan of things. In the presence of these realities, life rises to a new level of

meaning, man accepts his spiritual "dominion," and thus becomes the builder of a new kingdom on earth.

The church is a redemptive force. It brings the Christian gospel to bear upon the sins of men and the ills of society, for this gospel is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. 1:16). To the church is entrusted the destiny of the life-transforming message of Christ; upon its fidelity and zeal depend the salvation of men and the redemption of the world. It is the only redeeming agency through which the Spirit of God works for the salvation of man, and therefore what God is able to do in this world rests largely in the hands of those who direct the program of the church. There is no greater sense of responsibility resting upon any group than that which moves the hearts of those who have become aware that their faithfulness and zeal in guiding the means through which God's redemptive power operates will determine the spiritual destiny of people for time and eternity.

The church is world wide in its scope. Membership in it is a citizenship in a kingdom that knows no boundaries. A sense of that world citizenship, with all its implications, is essential to a proper appreciation of the work and worth of the church. As the marching orders for the followers of Christ were first voiced, "Go, . . . make disciples of all the nations," they lifted provincial, narrow-thinking men to a world outlook and a world passion. The church is a "colony of heaven" set among men to build a heavenly society and make that society world wide.

The church constantly ministers to the growing, changing needs of humanity. It has been "fluid" in its response and ministry in order to meet the emergent situations of an expanding world. Set in the midst of a society by One who "went about doing good," the church meets the needs of a world growing more complex and intricate with each passing century. Keeping abreast of this changing scene, the church develops new functions and new techniques for building the Kingdom of God in the hearts of men. Ministering to individuals beset with new perplexities, wrestling with the problems of a society

growing ever more complex, challenging to new social responsibilities all who come within the range of its influence, the church, while centuries old, is as modern as today's needs. And it meets those needs with today's solutions.

The church is the marvel of the ages. Guided by human instrumentality, beset by human weaknesses and frailties and shortcomings, hindered by human mistakes and misjudgment and shortsightedness, weighted down with the sins and prejudices and ignorance of its friends, the church has moved forward to be the blessing and inspiration of every generation. God has used the church, with all its human frailties and weaknesses, to speak his message and to do his work in the world. His power has been revealed in his church and has repeatedly been "made perfect in weakness."

There is a sense of permanency in the church. It is the "living eternal." It has eternal relationships: God, the timeless purpose of God, and the unchanging fatherly love of God. It has an unvarying permanence in its mission: the redemption of humanity, the nurture of sons of God, and the building of the Kingdom of God among men. Then there is the relentless permanence of its high ideals: men ought to live and act like sons of God and strive to measure up to the "stature of the fulness of Christ." Men may come and go, nations may rise and fall, civilizations may flower and fall into decay; but the church is the "living eternal."

All of these considerations inspire and challenge us as we plan to carry forward the work of the church with which we have been entrusted. A deep appreciation of these responsibilities impresses us that we must plan carefully and prayerfully if we are to be good stewards of God's business. Only after serious study of the program of the church, as God intended it, shall we be able to guide the church to the accomplishment of his purpose.

Thus as we set about to organize the church to accomplish its spiritual mission, we recognize that we are not working with human plans alone; we are channeling divine resources, spiritual

verities, eternal realities, and priceless goods of the soul. Only as opportunity is given for the Spirit of God to work through the souls of men can the goal be achieved. While we deal with the mechanics of administration, we are aware that "except the LORD build the house, they labor in vain that build it" (Ps. 127:1). The attitudes, motives, spirit, and purpose of the leaders who do the tasks are more important than the plans of organization or the processes by which responsibilities are carried out. Therefore, "let the word of Christ dwell in you richly" (Col. 3:16).

Nevertheless, significant purposes will not be accomplished in the local congregation unless plans are seriously, studiously, and prayerfully made to achieve them. Intricate, statesmanlike, and seemingly miraculous achievements repeatedly amazed us in the war because men planned intelligently, comprehensively, and minutely on a global scale. The program of a church—any church in any place—is worthy the wisest organization, the most careful planning, and the utmost effort to achieve results. Great things will be accomplished, when great things are wisely planned. A host of people will be enlisted in the work of the church, when worthy, challenging, constructive, goals are suggested. Great leaders will give themselves to the work of the kingdom, when effective, businesslike plans are made for the "spiritual campaigns" of the Kingdom of God.

Doing God's work in a way worthy of God, in a way that will bring glory to Christ, in a way that will build an effective society of Jesus, and in a way that will express God's redemptive power—that should be the goal of every local church and of every group of leaders in the local church.

CHAPTER II

BEGINNINGS OF CHURCH ORGANIZATION

JESUS came into the world to put a new spirit into the hearts of men. It was to make them embodiments of the Kingdom of Heaven. "The kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:21). This spirit was to transform them into a new kind of men, with new interests, new purposes, and new relationships in life. This new spirit was to bring men into a new relationship with God—the relationship of grace, sonship, and partnership. It was to bring men into a new relationship with each other—brotherhood in Christ, membership in the family of God and in the household of faith. This spirit was to put a new purpose at the heart of life—the redemption of the world. It was to lift men to a new level of living—where spiritual values and motives become the dynamic for all of life.

Calling the Twelve

To accomplish the task of releasing this new spirit into the world, Jesus called twelve men about him and began to teach them. This plan of teaching men who were to be the leaders of the new movement was of primary importance. Jesus taught them, and sent them out to their new task. They returned and reported, and he continued his teaching. This process of teaching and practice, and of observation and teaching, went on through three significant years. To the Founder of the church the thorough training of leaders for his church was of utmost importance. He drew them out from a life regimented by forms and ceremonies and gave them a new inner spirit. This inner spirit was to make them new men, patterned after the Great Teacher's own life. The new dynamic was to be an inner compulsion, giving life direction and force from within. These

followers of Christ were to be one with him in spirit and purpose. This oneness or unity of spirit between Christ and his followers was to be like that between Christ and God. Jesus spent three years interpreting this new spirit to his disciples and preparing them to live this new life.

A New Society

Before the end of his period of teaching, it began to be evident that it was Jesus' purpose to carry forward this new spirit by means of a new fellowship or society. In solemn convocation Jesus proclaimed this intention to his disciples, choosing for the announcement that auspicious moment when Peter had that special insight into the divine purpose which was voiced in the Good Confession. Jesus said, "Upon this rock I will build my church (Matt. 16:18). He was to build in the midst of humanity a new society—his church—and it would be on a new foundation, "Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone" (Eph. 2:20). He knew that a new society would be necessary to give this new spirit habitation and concreteness, and to give inspiration and solidarity to its program. It was to be a "called out" group, manifesting a distinctive separateness and drawn together by new integrating relationships. It was to have a new body of teaching, a new message for the souls of men, and a new sense of destiny for all humanity.

The Pattern of the New Society

After the day of Pentecost the pattern of this new society could be seen. Pentecost revealed the definite message—the gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ—which was to be the distinctive doctrine of the new society. It was the message of a crucified Savior and risen Lord. "God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified" (Acts 2:36). Later, Paul declared that the whole gospel was summed up in this "triologue": "that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath been

raised on the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:3-4).

Soon it became apparent that this new society had new expressions of its common life. "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42). Its teaching and practice revealed that two ordinances were at the heart of its corporate life, symbolizing the cardinal tenets of the new faith. The practice of baptism, established in the parting command of Christ, symbolized the redemptive experiences of our Lord himself. The Lord's Supper, keeping the disciples mindful of the redemptive sacrifice of Jesus, became the center of worship. The observance of a new day as a memorial to the resurrection of Jesus from the dead set their worship in a new pattern. Thus emerged the form of the new fellowship into which the disciples were led, in accordance with the promise of Jesus: "He, the Spirit of truth . . . shall guide you into all the truth" (John 16:13).

New Functions in the Church

When the church grew and its responsibilities increased, it developed new functions to meet these responsibilities. Soon the need of organization and a division of function became evident. In Jerusalem the first need gave rise to the election of seven men to "serve tables" (Acts 6:3). They were to look after some benevolent work and oversee the distribution of the common fund. That they performed other functions is evidenced by the activities of Stephen and Philip. In appointing the seven men "over this business," the apostles announced that they themselves would "continue stedfastly in prayer, and in the ministry of the word" (Acts 6:4). They were to give attention to prayer and preaching. It was a division of function to meet particular needs of the expanding work of the church.

Paul, in writing to the church at Corinth, lists other special needs that had arisen, indicating that men were appointed to perform certain functions in the light of these needs. As the missionary spirit led to the establishment of churches in great

numbers, the need of various functions was increasingly recognized and provision was made for men to serve in the several capacities required. In the church at Corinth, Paul enumerates them as apostles, prophets, teachers, miracles, gifts of healing, helps, governments, divers kinds of tongues (1 Cor. 12:28). Some had a special function to perform to meet the needs of a limited time; others ministered to needs that were permanent, and their functions continue to the present.

In Paul's letter to the Ephesians, we find another list and the functions to which men were appointed. "And he gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints" (Eph. 4:11-12). "For the perfecting of the saints" certain needs had arisen, and certain individuals were appointed to perform those functions that would meet these needs.

Church Organization Begins

Later, when Paul found it necessary to delegate to Timothy and Titus the responsibility of organizing congregations to meet the needs of particular groups, he gave these two young men careful instructions as to how they should proceed. To Titus he wrote, "Appoint elders in every city" (Titus 1:5). Again, he tells Titus that elders should be men who are able "to exhort" and "to convict" (Titus 1:9). In writing to Timothy, Paul reminds him that an elder must be one who is qualified to "take care of the church of God" (1 Tim. 3:5) and especially emphasizes the importance of the work performed by those elders "who labor in the word and in teaching" (1 Tim. 5:17).

Addressing the Ephesian elders, Paul exhorts them "to feed the church of the Lord" (Acts 20:28) and "to help the weak" (Acts 20:35). Peter, writing to another group of elders, exhorts them to "tend the flock of God" (1 Pet. 5:2) and to make themselves "ensamples to the flock" (1 Pet. 5:3).

The qualifications of deacons are also delineated by Paul in his letter to Timothy (1 Tim. 3:8-13). The specific functions

which they were to perform are not enumerated; Paul simply states that those who have proved worthy of the office are to "serve as deacons."

The organization of the church, with leaders responsible for various functions, is firmly rooted in the teachings of the New Testament. The selection of certain persons for certain tasks, on the basis of their spiritual qualifications, rests upon New Testament teaching and precedent. Leaders in the church today enter into a divinely instituted plan and procedure.

From this analysis, it seems that a variety of needs were arising in the expanding church and that the performance of certain functions were designated to meet these needs. The organization of the church to meet these needs was flexible, for some of the needs were temporary, such as those served by "gifts of healings, . . . miracles, . . . divers kinds of tongues"; while others were continuing needs, for example, those ministered to by evangelists, pastors and teachers, elders and deacons. The performance of the functions which these needs suggest became a permanent charge upon the church. In it all, the principle that is timeless seems to be that "the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:12) is the permanent work of the church.

These continuing functions of the church are the responsibility of each congregation today. In a small church, they may be performed by a simple organization; in a large church, the organization may be complex and intricate. In either case, the organization is only a means to an end; it should be enough—and only enough—to accomplish the end. Care should be taken, however, to provide that it shall enlist the whole church in the whole task.

CHAPTER III

EARLY CHURCH OFFICERS

THE church was launched with the greatest task ever committed to men as its responsibility. It was to bring God's message to the souls of men, redeem them to the position of sons of God, and build a new society in the world. As significant as that is for men, it is of greater significance to God. God's plan for his kingdom on earth is committed to the church and those who guide the church. God is effective in his purpose as his church is effective; God is hindered as his church is ineffective. Thus the program of the church has been entrusted to men, and God has made the success of his cause dependent upon their devotion, fidelity, and integrity as "good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Pet. 4:10).

As the church grew and expanded, the responsibilities of spiritual leadership increased. To meet these responsibilities, men were assigned to perform certain functions; and as the needs increased, new functions were added. The growth and effectiveness of the church depended upon the exercise of these functions. Men were to be trained for them, and they were to give themselves diligently to the upbuilding of the church through them. The procedure was not to establish offices and elect men to fill them; rather there was work to be done, and men were assigned to do the work. Needs were to be met, and men were assigned to meet the needs. Functions were to be performed, and men were assigned to the functions.

Elders—Qualifications and Duties

Elders were given responsibility in the early church. Describing the activity of Paul and his companions in the churches, Luke states that "they had appointed for them elders in every

church" (Acts 14:23). And Paul reminds Titus that he had given him a charge to "appoint elders in every city" (Titus 1:5). From the careful statement of qualifications, and the high responsibility placed upon these men, it is clear that those who were called to this function occupied a place of grave importance. The spiritual growth of men and the progress of the church of Jesus Christ depended upon their wise spiritual guidance.

The qualifications were set forth in detail. Some were negative, and some were positive. On the negative side were these: an elder must not be given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre, not covetous, not a brawler, not a novice, not self-willed, not soon angry. Among the positive qualities required of an elder were these: he must be the husband of one wife, govern his house well, be vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, patient, a lover of good men, just, holy, blameless, temperate, of good report, must hold fast sound doctrine, and be apt to teach (1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9). Therefore, men of the highest Christian character were to be chosen to guide the "household of faith." They were to possess those qualities of character which would reflect the Spirit of God and win the respect of the congregation. They were to have a good reputation as Christian men among those outside the church, thus enabling the church to merit and win the respect of those who were not followers of Christ.

Certain functions were to be performed by the elders. These functions grew out of the needs of the congregations, and their purpose was to develop the spiritual life of the church. Among them were these: they were to "take care of the church of God"; they were to "exhort" and "convict"; they were to "labor in the word and in teaching"; they were to "tend the flock of God," and be "ensamples to the flock"; they were to hold to "the faithful word," bear "rule," and "help the weak." The spiritual growth of members of the church and the effective work of the church depend upon these functions. The first consideration was that the church should be an effective instrument for God's purpose and that members of the church should grow

in grace and in knowledge. Men were assigned to lead the church to these ends.

In some instances these men were called "elders" (Acts 14:23; 20:17; 1 Pet. 5:1) and in others "bishops" [overseers] (Acts 20:28; Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:1; Titus 1:7). They were to be men of mature judgment, of known Christian experience, and possessing the qualities of leadership. They were to be men sensitive to the will of God, of sound faith, and zealous for the advancement of the Kingdom of God in all its phases. They were to give guidance and direction to the work of the church, to see that the membership was taught, and make sure that the church was properly organized to accomplish the task of the kingdom and the purposes of God. They were to accomplish all this by a devotion in life that would inspire others. They were to lead by a willing, consecrated, Christlike example.

Deacons—Qualifications and Duties

Another group of men who served in the church to perform certain functions was known as deacons. The first men elected to a specific task that needed to be done were the seven chosen at Jerusalem to "serve tables" (Acts 6:2-3). While they were not called "deacons," they were chosen to do a work or to perform a service similiar to that expressed elsewhere in the phrase "serve as deacons." They were elected because there was work to be done. They were "men of good report, full of the Spirit and of wisdom." In modern terms, we should say that they were appointed to a committee to perform a certain function. That there was flexibility in their service and latitude in their performance of other functions is evidenced by the fact that Stephen became noted as a preacher and Philip as an evangelist.

Paul wrote to Timothy defining qualifications and duties that should guide him in appointing deacons to do the work needed in churches that he visited. The qualifications were these: a deacon must be grave, truthful, not given to wine, not greedy

of filthy lucre; he must hold the mystery of faith in a pure conscience; he must be proved, blameless, the husband of one wife; he must rule his children and his home well, and he must not abuse his office of deacon. Also the deacons' wives were to be grave, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things (1 Tim. 3:8-15). Deacons were to serve the church and perform whatever functions were needed, either continuously or temporarily, to advance the spiritual welfare of the people and the cause of Christ. They were to be willing and ready to serve well as deacons. They were to be men of high Christian character, whose devotion to their tasks and whose spirit in the performance of these tasks would merit the confidence of their fellow workers and the respect of those that were without the church. Paul could think of no term that better fitted his own life than "a servant of Jesus Christ"; deacons who faithfully perform their functions enter into that high fellowship in which Paul gloried. It is a function fraught with grave responsibilities and holy opportunities.

Deaconesses—Qualifications and Duties

The Scriptures indicate that women were also servants of the church and performed certain functions. Paul speaks of "Phoebe our sister, who is a servant [deaconess] of the church," and of Prisca, who, with her husband Aquila, Paul terms as "my fellow-workers in Christ Jesus"; then he mentions Mary, "who bestowed much labor on you" (Rom. 16:1-6). Here we find that women were performing noteworthy functions and rendering great service to the churches. We have come to call these women "deaconesses." They do not seem to have been appointed in all churches, and there is no list of formal qualifications or duties outlined. They were consecrated and capable Christian women who met certain needs in some of the churches and performed functions that advanced the cause of Christ. Therefore, there is a precedent for women as servants of the church.

Appointed to Perform Functions

These officers, then, were in the congregations in the early church: elders and deacons, who were appointed to certain responsibilities and charged with the performance of certain functions according to apostolic example and direction; and deaconesses, whose service to the church was recognized as worthy of mention. The deaconesses, by this precedent, may well perform certain functions which meet needs best served by women. The work of all—elders, deacons and deaconesses—was functional, not official. The needs of the congregations, or groups of Christians, created the work which was essential to the "building up of the body of Christ." People were appointed to perform the services that met the needs.

Sacred Stewardship

The positions of elder, deacon, and deaconess were of high honor and sacred stewardship. Those who are called to the spiritual guidance of a congregation and to serve its spiritual well-being are charged with a holy responsibility. In accepting this responsibility they become "stewards" of God's goods, managers of his business, partners in a divine enterprise. The destiny of men's souls depends upon their wisdom, and the outreach of God's grace upon their vision. If they serve faithfully and well, the church will grow, and its influence will be felt in lives, in homes, in communities, and in the world. If they are careless of their stewardship, little children will be crippled spiritually, young people will be maimed in soul, men and women dwarfed in spirit, and the church of Christ will be unequal to its task. A "steward" holds a position of grave accountability. Every function should be performed as in the sight of Him whose work it is, and in the knowledge that an account will have to be rendered of the opportunities offered. It is God's church, and we serve as unto him.

Work to Be Done

Officers are chosen to do a work, not to fill a position. The only way the office can be filled creditably is by doing the work in such a way that it brings honor to the office and to the church. Men who consider the work lightly, or do it carelessly, dishonor the office and bring discredit to the church. The church is a great spiritual business, dealing with the intangibles and the imponderables of the Divine Spirit; those who guide the human spirit in the use of this spiritual merchandise must give to it serious study and consecrated service. The work of the church has grown more complicated as society has become more complex, and the cultivation of the spiritual life presents more problems as the pressures of life increase. The development of life has the serious and trained attention of skilled leaders in every realm in the community—education, social welfare, recreation, and others. Church leaders must give equal study and training to life at its spiritual level. The problems of humanity have led to the development of skilled technicians in every phase of life, and the church must give skilled and trained attention to the spiritual phase. Business demands specialists in every area, and the church must bring specialized knowledge to the spiritual area. Guidance of the church should call forth intelligent study, wise application of that study, and careful planning, with vision and understanding.

The Scriptures indicate no division of responsibility with respect to the duties of the elders and deacons. There is no evidence that the elders looked after the spiritual life of the congregation and the deacons the temporal affairs. When the first "deacons" were appointed to a task in Jerusalem, it might have been designated as a temporal task, "serve tables," but the fact that Stephen became noted as a preacher and Philip as an evangelist indicates that they were spiritual leaders as well. One common task was recognized, namely, the spiritual culture and progress of the church. Nothing that has to do with the church can be set apart and called "temporal." The grounds, the building, the furnishings—in short, the physical

equipment of a congregation—create the spiritual climate in which worship is conducted. One who serves the church in this area mistakes his function if he fails to see the spiritual value of his task. A "doorkeeper in the house of . . . God" is a servant of the Most High. Nothing that is worth doing for God should be minimized; it should be surrounded with the dignity of divine significance. "Whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Col. 3:17).

High Privileges in Functions

Those who are chosen to the high privilege of partnership with God in guiding his work and leading in his program share in a sacred responsibility. Minister, elder, deacon, and deaconess have a common task—that of giving their utmost to the upbuilding of the church of Jesus Christ. They have a common responsibility—that of bringing their best knowledge and wisdom to the task. They have a common fellowship—a brotherly comradeship as sons of God in a work that is of the highest interest to their heavenly Father.

The elders—men more spiritually mature—may well guide by their experience and counsel. Their seasoned Christian lives, more mature experience in Christian work, and devotion to the kingdom will be a source of inspiration to all. The deacons, with their consecration to the church and their eagerness to serve the kingdom, will bring joy to all as they grow in service and responsibility. The deaconesses, with their queenly Christian devotion and their womanly insights, will enrich the faith and vision of the leadership of the church. The minister will share his training and experience freely with all. In the pooling of Christian devotion and experience, in the comradeship of thought and prayer, in sharing with others the performance of this holy and sacred work, where each serves for the interest of all and in a sense of partnership with the God of all—here the officers of the church build together for the glory of God and for the salvation of men.

CHAPTER IV

ELECTION AND TENURE OF OFFICE

NOTHING a congregation does is more important than the choice of the personnel of its board. When they choose out from among them people who are to make the plans and guide the program of the church, they are determining the destiny of the church. If they choose people of vision and consecration, the church will go forward and the work of the kingdom will prosper. If people are chosen who are indifferent to the responsibility and shortsighted in spiritual affairs, the church will be hindered and the work crippled. The greatest business in the world ought to have the leadership of the greatest souls in the church.

Election of Members of the Church Board

Election of members of the church board should be by a procedure carefully planned, and adopted by the congregation. It should be a dignified, orderly method, prayerfully followed. The congregation is choosing those whom the Lord is to use in the guidance of his church. There is no place for petty politics or shallow favoritism. It is a holy procedure, and everything should be done reverently.

A nominating committee should be appointed. It should be thoroughly democratic and representative of the church. In a large church it may well be composed as follows: two elders appointed by the elders, two deacons appointed by the deacons, two deaconesses appointed by the deaconesses, and two members from the congregation appointed by the chairman of the church board. In smaller churches, one from each group may be large enough. In many large churches the nominating committee is appointed at the annual congregational meeting and serves

through the whole year. If this is not the case, the committee should be appointed at least three months before the annual election. It should elect its own officers—chairman and secretary—and should give prayerful study and thought to its important task. The committee should have a sufficient number of meetings to do its work well. The members of the committee should think only of the best interests of the church and should sacredly guard any confidential matters discussed. When the work is completed, a report should be carefully prepared, ready for presentation at the annual congregational meeting.

When the committee has decided upon a certain person for nomination for an office, this person should be visited and the responsibilities of the office carefully explained, together with the qualifications for it. These calls may be made by the members of the nominating committee. Often the pastor wishes to interview nominees. No one should be nominated without being interviewed and giving his consent to serve. No one should be lightly introduced to the sacred office. It is appropriate to include Scripture and prayer in the interview. It is worth all the effort involved, for the future service of the individual may be enhanced in this introduction to office.

The election of these officers—trustees, elders, deacons, and deaconesses—should always be by the congregation. It is preferable to hold the election at a congregational business meeting, and it should be by ballot. In most congregations the nominating committee submits more names than offices to be filled, so that the congregation may make a selection between them. This is the more democratic procedure. In some congregations, however, the committee submits only the number of names which corresponds to the various vacancies to be filled. In either case, opportunity should be given at the time of election for other nominations, and the balloting should be done in the spirit of prayer. The election may be held at a regular service of the church if that is the established procedure. Every effort should be made to let this be the expression of the prayerful thought and desire of the people.

In small congregations, election may be by preferential ballot instead of having a nominating committee. In that case, the congregation simply writes the names of people for each office, writing as many names as there are offices to be filled in each group—elders, deacons, deaconesses, or trustees—in the order of preference. When the ballots are counted, those receiving the highest number of votes, up to the number of persons needed to fill the offices in the several groups, will be declared elected. This is thoroughly democratic and is the best way to determine the will of the congregation. In larger congregations, however, the nominating committee, as suggested before, will bring the best results.

Installation of Officers

A formal installation of the elected officers should be held as the highest act of one of the regular hours of worship or else it should be made the central part of some other significant service. These people should be set apart in the Lord's name as the servants of the Most High to do his work. In the presence of the whole congregation they should accept their responsibilities and pledge themselves to their fulfillment. Such a service of installation will dignify the offices in the minds of the officers and in the life of the congregation.

Trustees

The office of trustee fulfills a legal requirement in most states. Trustees are the officers who take title to the property and effect legal transactions. The number should be that required by the particular state. Trustees may be elected from the elders, deacons, deaconesses, or from the congregation at large. They may be elected for any term designated by the church, unless the state stipulates a tenure. Usually the terms are so arranged that expiration occurs in rotation rather than simultaneously.

Elders

The elders may be elected for such tenure as may be agreed upon by the church. Perhaps the most common term is three

years, with one-third expiring each year. Some churches elect for six years, with one-third expiring each two years. The number may also be determined to fit the needs of the church. Several large churches observe the rule of having one elder for each one hundred members, but smaller churches would need more than that. In any case, the number ought to be large enough to be representative of the congregation.

Deacons and Deaconesses

The tenure of office of deacons may be determined by the local congregation. The most prevalent practice is probably a tenure of three years, with one-third expiring each year. Some churches observe the rule of having four deacons for each one hundred members, but smaller churches would need more than that number. If deaconesses are included in the church board, they will observe the same tenure as that of the deacons. They should be elected on a percentage basis, but the percentage need not necessarily be the same as that of the deacons. The number of deacons and deaconesses should be large enough to be representative of the congregation.

Size of the Church Board

There is no rule as to how large a church board should be, but it ought to be large enough to perform the functions of the church adequately. The larger the board, which gives itself seriously to the tasks of the church, the better the church will be. The congregation ought to feel that its leadership expresses the mind and will of the church and is democratically serving the interests of the whole. Nothing chills the life of a congregation like the suspicion of a dictatorship; a large, widely representative, and democratically chosen church board is the surest way to prevent such suspicion. Every church, large or small, ought to have a board large enough to represent, and have the confidence of, the whole church.

An increasing number of churches have what is called a rotating board. No member may succeed himself in office;

he must wait at least a year after the expiration of his term before he may be nominated to any office on the board. This system is often used in large churches so that a greater number of qualified people can be used in the service of the church. It gives an opportunity to train people in the work of the church and to discover leadership abilities. A rotating board makes for greater democracy in the leadership of the church.

When an officer becomes careless of his responsibility, it reflects upon the sacred office and hinders the work of the church. In this case, two or more devoted and respected men should confer with the irresponsible officer to ascertain the reason for his neglect of duty. The counselors should weigh the offender's response carefully and should be prepared to offer encouragement where there is a genuine obstacle in the way of his giving proper attention to his tasks; they should be equally prepared to admonish him in case the answer indicates a spirit of indifference and to warn that unless greater attention is given to the sacred responsibility his office will be filled by someone else at the next election. While church boards may have honorary members—people who because of long and faithful service and advanced age or failing health should be relieved of active duty—the regular office is not conferred upon an individual to honor him; it is a position of service, and when that service is not rendered to the best of one's ability, one thereby disqualifies oneself for the office.

It is a high privilege to be chosen as a member of a church board. It brings one into fellowship with the greatest souls in a congregation and enables one to help guide the church to effective influence in the world. The time spent in this service should be considered the best investment of one's life that one could possibly make. There are those who look back upon the years thus spent as the richest experience they have ever had.

CHAPTER V

THE TASK OF THE CHURCH

A SOUND philosophy of church organization, indicating two important areas in church life, is found in the words of Isaiah: "Lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes" (Isa. 54:2). The implication is that there are two directions in which to work to build the church of Christ. The church should make a constant effort to lengthen its reach and influence, to increase its contacts, and to broaden the scope of its program. It should be world wide in its interests and should seek to make every member a world citizen of the Kingdom of God. The quotation from Isaiah indicates, too, that a constant effort should be made to deepen the spiritual life of each member of the church by encouraging continuous growth. As it is unfair for parents to bring a child into the world and neglect to feed it properly or give guidance to its growing life, so also it is unfair for a church to bring a child into the family of God and neglect to provide spiritual food and guidance in Christian living. To enrich the membership of the church and give spiritual inspiration to growing lives is to "strengthen the stakes."

Jesus emphasized these two important phases of church responsibility when he inaugurated the program of the church. His parting exhortation, which rings like a bell to challenge us, gives the program of the church. "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, . . . teaching them." Thus Jesus gives infinite scope to the spiritual horizon, boundless stretch to the spiritual imagination, and challenging fields for spiritual exploration. "Go ye, . . . and make disciples"—what adventure, what pioneering, what tasks lie out before the church! At the same time, he gave infinite depths for us to fathom,

interesting experiments in great living, a spiritual laboratory in which to work, and intriguing formulas to try out in daily practice. "Teaching them to observe"—what principles to live, what ideals to challenge, what spiritual achievements to try our mettle, what adventures in heroic living lie within the church!

The Church—a Field and a Force

The church is both a field and a force. It is a field that needs cultivating, that needs constant care and attention, that needs enrichment. There will be the effort to cultivate a little more deeply each year, to stir new soil, to break up crusted attitudes, to eradicate deep-rooted prejudices, to bring new faith and richer experience. There will be constant effort to provide opportunities for development that will make the yield of spiritual harvest more abundant. The church field will need new truths and new vision and new inspirations that will add quality to the harvest. There will be the constant fight with the weeds and burs that spring up to sap the soil and hinder the crop. The care and attention that must be given to keep down the "tares" is the tragedy of the church field. Jesus told a story of the fields and called attention to the necessity of working packed roadbeds, blasting stony places, and fertilizing shallow soil so that they might yield a harvest. Furthermore, we are often content with the thirtyfold yield when more care would bring fiftyfold or even a hundredfold. The church is a field, and the possibility of the field is limitless.

The church has no force until it is a producing field. But when the church has become a field of faith and zeal and spiritual awareness, it becomes a potent force. When it is yielding a rich harvest, it becomes a storehouse to feed and strengthen the spiritual life of a hungry and needy world. The church that is a force is like a mighty army marching against the unrighteousness of the world. The church that is a force is on a crusade that began nineteen hundred years ago and will lead up to

the very gates of heaven. The church that is a force can reach around the world and grapple with the darkness until the light shines through. Every church ought to make its influence felt as a force in every Christian enterprise in the world. The thought of the church as a field turns attention to the inner resources of the church and the cultivation of them to their highest possible effectiveness; the thought of the church as a force leads to the outreach of the church and the cultivation of that outreach to its greatest possibility.

In order to face its responsibilities in lengthening its cords and strengthening its stakes, to cultivate the field and expend the force, the church may be divided into departments, or areas, of church life. Every phase of church life should be covered so that the church may grow into a well-rounded, fully developed spiritual body, using all its resources to extend the Kingdom of God. Each major function of the church will be designated as a department, so that the great functions of the church will have proper emphasis. Therefore, "department" will be used to speak of a "function" as it relates to the whole church. The evangelism department, for instance, will concern itself with evangelism as a function of the whole church, and will relate all the church together in a common task of evangelism. The "committee" will refer to the people who are designated to guide the "department." As will be seen later, the "committee" will head up in the church board, but it should study and plan for evangelism throughout the church. It would be well to have on its membership, therefore, people from all areas of the church life. It should have people from the women's organization, the men's club or laymen's league, the church school, the youth group, children's workers; in fact, every major organization or area of the church. They will help to build a program for the whole church, and then carry it back into the life of the whole church. This will result in an aggressive, intelligent, well-planned development of the church in all areas.

Departments for the Enrichment of Church Life

These departments will focus the attention of the membership on the task of cultivating the inner life of the church. While they will contribute to the willingness and the ability of the church to reach out, they will be concerned primarily with deepening and enriching the spiritual life of the church membership.

1. *Membership department.* To study the membership of the church, classify members according to activity and needs, seek to develop plans to enliven the interest of each group, enlist all members in fellowship in the church family, place new members in the congregational life, and plan the social life of the congregation in such a way as to develop the spirit of family solidarity will be the responsibilities of this department.

2. *Education department.* It will be the responsibility of the education deparment to study and develop the church school to greatest effectiveness, plan a total church program of education, in cooperation with other departments, that will enrich the life of the entire membership, and provide for and guide extension activities in education. This will involve a program for the study of current social problems, personal religious needs, responsibilities of church membership—in fact, all phases of Christian living.

3. *Worship and devotional life department.* The purpose of this department is to study and enrich the corporate worship of the church in public worship and in all groups in the church, to guide in a program of personal religious living, to cultivate the religious life of families as units in the church life, to develop the music of the church as an aid to worship, to magnify the ordinances of the church as means of spiritual enrichment.

4. *Finance and stewardship department.* This department will study the stewardship awareness of the membership and guide in a farsighted program of education in all the life of the church, planning financial programs of the church as schools of spiritual responsibility and expression.

5. *Property department.* To magnify the house of the Lord by creating an atmosphere of worship and reverence and studying the most effective equipment to bring about spiritual results will be the responsibilities of this department.

Other departments may be added, or these may be subdivided; but the foregoing outline illustrates the principle that there are departments that will primarily engage in those functions that deepen and enrich the life of the membership of the church.

Departments to Extend the Outreach

Then there are those departments which will function to lift the vision, extend the horizon, and broaden the interests of the membership of the church. The possibilities in these areas are limitless. New attitudes, new insights, and new motives work for the enlargement of the life of the church. The following will give inspiration and channel the expression of the congregation in its outreach in the community and in the world.

1. *Evangelism department.* The function of this department is to guide the evangelistic zeal of the congregation into effective channels, to study the field and prepare it for the spiritual harvest, to plan and organize the forces for continuous outreach in this area.

2. *Missionary department.* This department will study the life of the congregation and develop missionary interest, cultivate the life of the church in relation to brotherhood interests, and relate the church to all Christian enterprises for the building of the Kingdom of God.

3. *Education department.* This is repeated to emphasize the responsibility of education in growing world citizens. Study and effort should be given to growing minds and hearts that have a world vision and a world passion.

Other departments may be added to broaden the interest and attitude of the church; but those departments listed in the foregoing paragraphs should have the primary responsibility in cultivating the whole life of the church as an effective force to

reach the unreached of the community and to make itself felt in the far corners of the earth.

In the small church, "functions" may be grouped together and a smaller number of "departments" organized. In the large church, "functions" may be separated and more "departments" organized. Each church should study its own program and its personnel and fit the organization to its needs and responsibilities. It should make certain, however, that the "functions" of the church are not slighted. Each church has definite responsibilities regardless of size, and the small church can meet its responsibilities just as adequately as the larger church.

These areas cannot be definitely "boxed in" as indicated in the outline, but the principle is that the church has certain responsibilities to its membership and to the world. If the church is organized to perform these major functions, covering the whole church, it will grow into a well-balanced church. If these departments are set side by side in the thinking and planning of the church, none will be neglected, but each will be given full recognition and its function will receive proper emphasis.

It is the whole church working at the whole task. Each committee should study what is happening within its particular area anywhere in the church and give encouragement, inspiration, and guidance that the fullest possible progress may be made. The leaders will then see their function as significant and will be ready to give time and study to their planning and time and effort to the achievement of the plans.

The task to which God gave thought, and which involved the Son of God in sacrificial service, and on which hangs the destiny of the human family, ought to challenge the devotion, the minds and hearts, and the consecrated service of those who are chosen to be partners with God in the guidance of the local church.

CHAPTER VI

ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH

NO INSTITUTION can succeed beyond the effectiveness of its organization. The church has a most important and varied task. It must meet the responsibilities placed upon it if it is to win the cooperation of its membership and do its work in the community and in the world. The church must be prepared to minister to people as individuals and en masse, to present suitable programs for the various age groups, to give guidance in the complicated problems of modern society, and to meet the heart hunger of humanity for worship, fellowship, and worthfulness. It must inspire people to undergird its program with financial support and to recognize themselves as partners with God in this enterprise. All of this must be done, in most part, with leadership that is voluntary and only partially trained. People will be happy in rendering this voluntary service when the organization in which they function is harmonious, effective, and accomplishing worthy results. They will give themselves to study and training if their task has definiteness and significance, and if they feel a sense of achievement commensurate with the time and effort expended.

The church is faced, therefore, with the necessity of careful planning and organization. Much study should be given to the talents and abilities of the membership in those channels through which the functions of the church may be effectively carried forward. With the work of the church so complicated and varied, careful thought should be given to departmental functions. With the personnel of the church only partially trained, careful attention should be given to assignment of responsibilities. With clear-cut responsibilities and work channeled through significant departments, people will be enthusiastic

and effective in the business of the Lord. A carefully planned organization, comprehensively embracing all phases of the work, will make a unified, effective, ongoing church.

Unity of Administration

The first principle of effective church organization is that there must be unity of administration. Although there are four types of officers on the church board, it should function as a unit. The responsibility of making the policies, of inaugurating and executing the business transactions, and of maintaining a planned and comprehensive program for the total church should rest with the total church board. In making plans for the church and adopting them as the church program, every member of the board should have an equal opportunity for expression, and each vote should have equal weight. Some members may be older and have more years of experience; on the other hand, some of those who are younger may be more highly trained in certain phases of church work. In any case, the policies and program of the church should be democratically considered and should become the program of the whole church. When the program is thus adopted, the whole church will have confidence in it and give it wholehearted support. The united church board should consider policies, make plans, review them, and carry forward the work of the church as a collective body. There must be unity in administration.

The Place of the Minister

The minister should be the counselor and adviser in all departments of church life. He is professionally trained in organization and administration. He is experienced in methods of church work and in materials to further the work of the departments. He will know the spiritual implications involved in the function of each department. His guidance will coordinate the various phases of the church program. The minister's training will enable him to advise officers and committees as to effective plans and methods. He will help them find ma-

terial to study in various departments and enable them to define their responsibilities.

One of the most important tasks of the modern minister is that of administration. The effectiveness of the church will depend largely upon his inspiration and guidance of its lay leaders. Various officers, departmental leaders, and committee members should seek the counsel of the minister in planning their programs and in preparing themselves to assume their responsibility in executing the plans that have been finally agreed upon and adopted by the church board as the program of the church.

Organization of Trustees

The trustees are the legal representatives of the congregation. They should have a chairman and a secretary. They are the legal custodians of the property and transact such business as is assigned to them by the church board. They should have no authority to do anything to or with the property or enter into any legal transactions except as authorized by the church board. When such an assignment is received, and carried out, the trustees should make a careful report to the church board as to the steps taken in the execution of the transaction. The trustees should be mindful of the fact that the property belongs to the church, and that they are elected only to give legal status to the business affairs of the congregation. They should acquaint themselves with the laws regarding matters relating to the church so that they may be prepared to give counsel to the church board when needed.

Organization of Elders

The elders should have a chairman, vice-chairman, and secretary. They should set a regular time for their meeting, according to their needs. Some meet monthly; others, once in two months; some, quarterly. They should meet their responsibilities with sincerity and devotion.

Among the many services which the elders may perform, one of the most significant is likely to be that of an advisory council to the minister. They may well discuss the long-time objectives of the church, evaluate the work of the church, suggest policies in the life of the church, and discuss such other matters as do not involve the administrative functions of the church board. The result of their discussions will, in some cases, guide the minister in planning the work of the church; in others, it will be carried into committees where the elders are regular members; in still others, it will be brought into the discussions of the church board in its regular sessions. Care should be taken, however, not to hand down decisions to the church board. Friction or lack of interest will soon result if the board feels that it is a "rubber stamp" for another group's administrative decisions. The elders may also give attention to matters of discipline, to problems that need confidential consideration by wise and consecrated men, and to tensions that involve personal adjustments in the family of the church. The fact that the minister has such a group as the elders in spiritual comradeship is a source of help and can become a bond of strength and power at the heart of the church.

Organization of Deacons and Deaconesses

The deacons may also be organized with a chairman, vice-chairman, and secretary. They may assume those responsibilities and perform those functions which are assigned to them by the total church board. Care should be taken, however, that they do not become an administrative body for the church. The deaconesses may elect their own officers and become responsible for certain duties which are agreed upon by the church board.

There may be four organizations within the church board, but it should be understood that each is a part of the whole. The responsibilities of each group should be carefully outlined, and no one of them should assume the prerogatives of the other or of the total church board. In many churches—this is es-

pecially true in small churches—the board functions as a whole and does not have separate organizations of elders, deacons, and deaconesses. The unity of the church board as an administrative body should be carefully guarded. The harmony of the church will be preserved best by unity of administration.

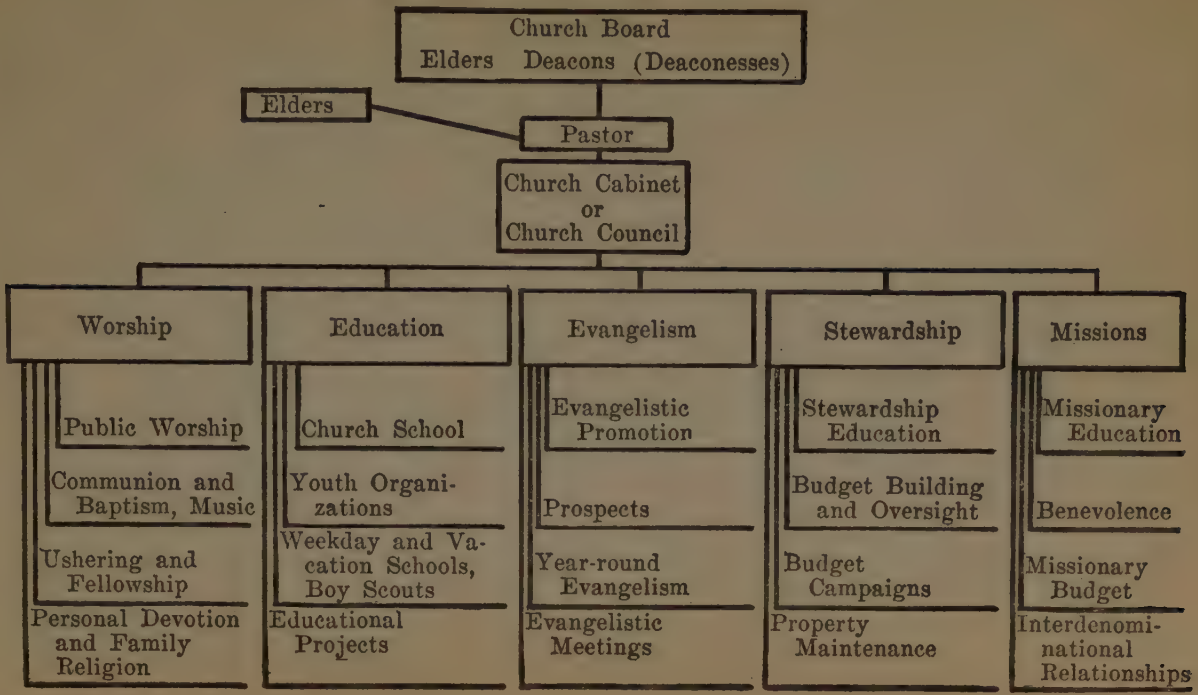
Church Cabinet or Council

The church cabinet or council may be set up to correlate the total work of the church, to relate the adopted program of the church to various areas of church life, and to make suggestions from the experience gained in carrying out the program. The cabinet or council should consist of the minister, as chairman, the chairman of the church board, the chairman of the elders, the chairmen of the various departments of the church, and the president (or a representative) of each of the auxiliary groups in the church. The church cabinet will seek to correlate all the organizations of the church, so that each may give support to the other for the most effective work. They will discuss the adopted church program and its relation to each of the various groups and seek to carry it through to all areas of the church. In the experience of the actual working of the plans and carrying out the program, they may make suggestions to the church board for the next year's plans. Thus the experience and wisdom of all groups of the church will be available to the functional departments and to the church board, whose responsibility it is to study the needs of the church and inaugurate plans to meet them.

The cabinet or council may also clear the calendar for major programs of the church and relate all programs to each other in proper sequence. It will avoid friction and lost motion among organizations. This group should focus attention on a smooth-running, harmonious fellowship, to the end that the church may reach its highest peak of efficiency. It should not be administrative but may make suggestions to the administrative body, arising out of its experiences. Particular care

SMALL CHURCH ORGANIZATION

This Is the Pattern of an Actual Church



should be taken that the cabinet does not become a hypercritical or dictatorial body.

Besides the chairman, a vice-chairman and a secretary should be chosen. Accurate records should be kept of all meetings, so that suggestions or ideas about programs may be referred to the proper department. The council or cabinet should meet once a month. By keeping the program of the church before the members, a thorough understanding of the program is possible, and adequate preparation may be made to carry it out. Also, evaluation of the program, while in the process of working out, will bring pertinent and helpful suggestions from the leaders.

In some churches the council or cabinet is composed of the heads of the various auxiliaries of the church—women's societies, men's league, youth groups, church school officers, and others. In other churches it is composed of the chairmen of the various committees of the church board. Whatever the membership of the correlating group, it will aid in the work of the church. In the small church, the leadership may be so closely related that a cabinet will be unnecessary, but in a large church it is wise to have a church cabinet.

Organization of the Board—Departmental Plan

The officers of the church board should consist of a chairman, two or more vice-chairmen, a secretary or clerk, and a treasurer. They should be nominated by a committee appointed two months before the end of the year. The committee should report at a special meeting following the election of new board members or at the first meeting of the church board at which new members are present. The chairman of the board will be an ex officio member of all committees of the board; the two vice-chairmen may be assigned the responsibility of sponsoring or cooperating with committees, each having one half the committees, and a third vice-chairman may be in charge of board attendance. The secretary will keep all records of the church business in proper order and be responsible for seeing that they are bound in permanent form. The treasurer will be the treasurer of the

church and have charge of such funds as are delegated to him. He should be under bond, and his accounts should be audited annually.

The major functions of the church ought to be expressed through departments, the departmental committees having the responsibility of studying their function, analyzing the needs of the church in their respective areas, and suggesting a program to meet these needs. The program formulated by each committee should be presented to the church board, where it should be thoroughly discussed and understood, and then adopted as the program of the church for that specific area. The committee charged with responsibility in that area then becomes the group to guide the church to achieve the objectives adopted for the area. The committee will be not only a part of the church board but also will be responsible to the whole church. It will seek to guide persons throughout the church to grow and develop in the area of life which its function emphasizes. The departmental committee will have primary responsibility in its own area; but where its function touches an area or areas in which other departmental committees have primary responsibility, a cooperative spirit should prevail, and plans and work should be correlated. For instance, the committee heading the department of worship and devotional life will evaluate the needs of the church in all areas and organizations in the light of its responsibility and may invite the leaders of each organization to meet with it. They may discuss what the church should attempt to do, what each group can do to help, and work out a program to suggest to the church board. When it is formally adopted as the program of the church, all who have anything to do with worship or devotional leadership anywhere in the church will share in the progress toward the objectives. Each committee, then, has a church-wide responsibility to encourage, give counsel, secure materials, and work toward a common purpose with all others in its particular area. This church-wide responsibility lifts each committee heading a department to a major status in the life of the church, inspires

the committee members to a thorough study of their task, and gives them a sense of definiteness in their work. The work of the church will actually be done in committees. After a few years the members of each committee will become specialists in the materials, methods, and programs of their department. Each department grows apace, and none lags behind. Proper emphasis is given each function of the church, and the church develops a well-balanced, comprehensive program, touching all phases of the church and all areas of its membership.

It is often the case that committees are appointed in the church board to do "chores." Perhaps a committee has only a small task, requiring little thought and effort. Busy men appointed to do little tasks in the church soon lose interest, and the church becomes a round of little "gadgets" to be "tinkered with." Or, as is often the case, a committee represents only the interests or jobs of the board, having no responsibility to the total life of the church. That, too, makes only a partial church program. But when the church is organized into departments—each comprising a major function of the church and related to the whole church life—it gives a worth and dignity that will challenge the busiest men and the best leadership within its membership. This plan magnifies the work of the church and makes God's business worthy of our best.

Membership of Departmental Committees

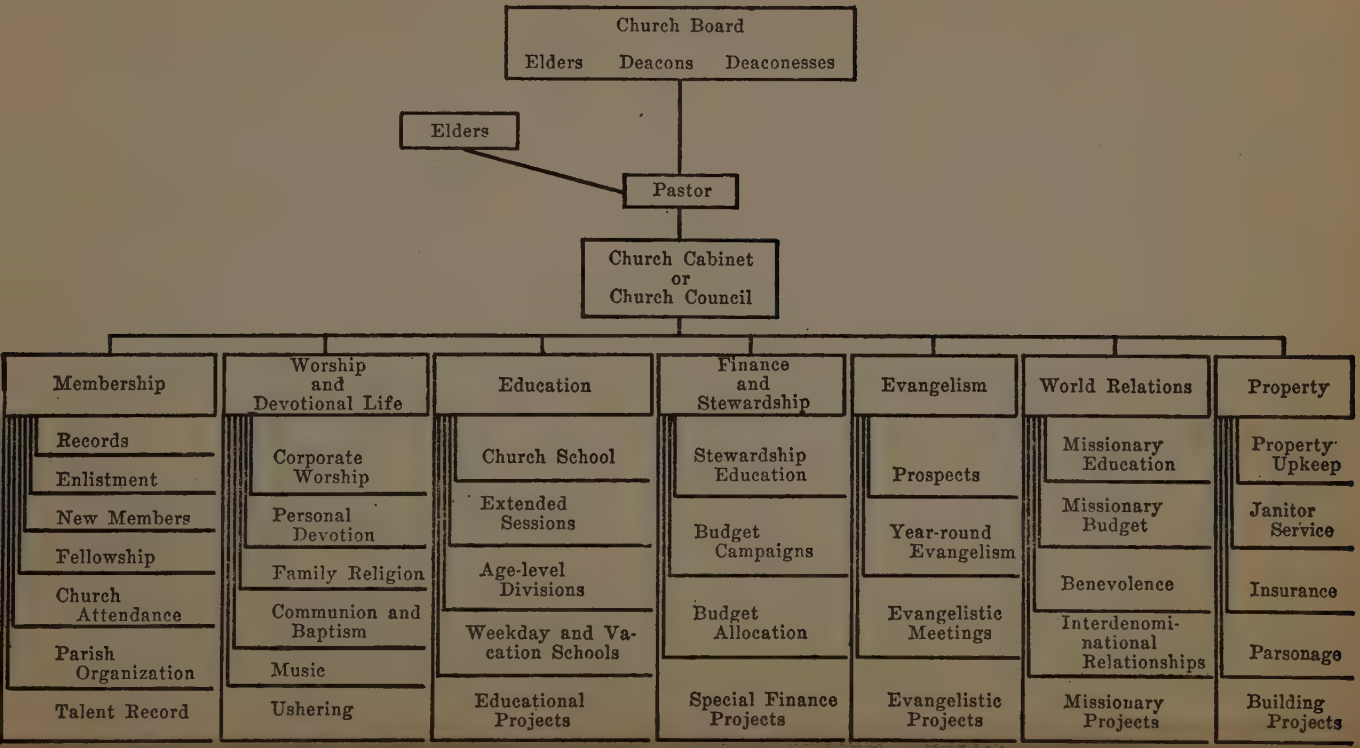
Careful consideration should be given to membership of the departmental committees. Members should recognize that the departments carry certain definite functions and that these functions are basic to the life and progress of the church. They should recognize that they will be responsible for organizing such programs as will issue in the most effective operation of these functions, presenting their plans to the board, and then seeing that they are carried out. People with the strongest possible leadership ability should be chosen for these important tasks. If possible, these committee members should be assigned to areas where they can render the greatest service, on the basis

of experience, training, or special gifts. The chairman of the church board, with the pastor, and perhaps the elected officers of the board, should meet to give careful thought to the selection of chairmen of the departmental committees. The success of the whole program of the church will hang on the outcome of this selection. Prayerful, frank, and serious thought should be given to it. The best people should be chosen; this is no occasion for petty favoritism or political juggling. When chairmen are chosen, they should be called in to help choose the personnel of their respective committees. Every member of the board ought to be on a committee, but preferably not on more than one. When the selections have been made, they should be presented to the board for ratification. This whole process ought to be carried out in such a way as to impress each member with the responsibility of his office and appointment. The dignity and work of every position should be exalted, and never minimized. Never should one be urged to accept a place on the assurance that "you won't have to do much." Rather the relationship of a given function to the church life as a whole and its place in the total program ought to be emphasized as a challenge worthy of the best talent that any member of the church may possess.

Each departmental committee ought to have a vice-chairman and a secretary. It may be well to divide most of the departments into subdivisions, with a committee in charge of each area. This may be especially true in large churches. Small churches may assign segments of the work to individual members of the committee or combine responsibilities as seems best. In making reports to monthly church board meetings, it would be well to have different members of the committee make the report from month to month. This method of report adds variety to the meeting and gives a sense of responsibility to committee members. Reports ought to be made in writing and should be as brief as possible while doing justice to the work accomplished in the department.

LARGE CHURCH ORGANIZATION

(The Pattern Outlined in This Book)



Other Patterns of Organization

Some other patterns of board organization are listed to show the variety used, and to present variations from the two graphs presented in this chapter. One excellently functioning medium-sized church has the following departments: worship, education, missions, stewardship, sociability, community service, practical service, and pastoral oversight. Another splendid church—a large one—has the following departments, with subdivisions under each:

1. Department of religious education. This department is composed of the church school council (Sunday school); weekday activities (boy scouts, cub pack, weekday Bible school); and church school extension (primary church and Christian Endeavor Society).

2. Department of evangelism. The subdivisions of this department are reception, prospects, and calling and conservation.

3. Department of worship. Under this department come Communion, ushers, music, and baptism.

4. Department of missions. Here are found missionary education, local benevolence, city missions, and servicemen.

5. Department of pastoral oversight. Shepherding and church policy comprise the divisions of this department.

6. Department of stewardship. The divisions of this department are finance and stewardship education.

7. Department of practical service. House, publicity, and transportation come under this committee.

8. Department of church night. This department's divisions are program and promotion.

While there is variety in the organizations outlined in this chapter, the major functions of the church remain practically the same. These are the great imperative and inescapable functions of the church.

Purpose of Organization

The purpose of organization is to serve people and to bring to them the enrichment and inspiration of the church. It is to enable them to grow and assume responsibility and take on spiritual stature in the process. The use of people in places of responsibility is a means of growth. They should therefore be placed on committees and led into service that they may grow in the work of the kingdom. New people placed with experienced workers are in a training school. A church should be constantly alert to use new people and develop their talents and to use older people in more responsible tasks. To train leaders and grow strong Christian statesmen within its ranks is one of the great opportunities of the church.

Program Planning

No church ever becomes greater than its plans. The needs of the church should be studied and plans carefully made for each phase of the work of the church. Some churches have a series of dinner meetings in May or June, the committees meeting separately after dinner to make the plans for the coming year. In others, the committees meet one after the other for two hours during June or early July, each making plans for the coming year in the area for which it is responsible. Whatever the method of meeting, plans should be made early and thoroughly. When all have met, a printed or mimeographed booklet may be prepared for "Program-launching Week." Program planning gives unity and concreteness to the work of the church and will inspire confidence and enlist cooperation.

Program Launching

Many churches have found it helpful to have an annual program launching retreat, or church leaders' conference. A good plan is to hold the conference on the first Sunday of September and over Labor Day. If a suitable camp can be secured, a program is set up and an effort is made to secure the

attendance of all the leaders. The plans for the next year will have been made by all departments and organizations of the church during the three months preceding, and in this conference the total program of the church is shared and inspiration given for a great "fall launching effort." A part of the time may be given to age-level groups, with resource leaders, the total program of the church being assembled and correlated from that viewpoint. The conference may conclude with a worship service or a commitment service that will challenge the whole leadership personnel of the church.

Program-launching Week is used in many churches. A week is set, perhaps the last week of September, and the whole program of the church is "launched" as a project that enlists every member and every organization of the church. Plans should be carefully made during the three months previous. The inspiration of the whole church, planning and working to get ready for the inauguration of the whole year's program, will give impetus to the task. Program-launching Week ought to be planned as a great campaign, with every interest brought to bear and every detail worked out.

Leadership Day

Shortly after the organization of departments and the selection of the personnel, a "Leadership Day" ought to be observed as one of the significant days in the whole year. Plans should be made well in advance and an effort made to have all leaders in all departments and organizations present—church board, church school, women's work, youth work, and other auxiliaries. This may well be on the opening Sunday of Program-launching Week. Leadership Day is not only a recognition of the service the leaders render; it is also a commissioning to further service and the acceptance of the responsibilities involved. Much should be made of it. An officiary should be printed or mimeographed, as should also the dedication service. The leaders will take it home, and it will be a token of their dedication. Some churches

print certificates or commissions and present them to the leaders. This Leadership Day magnifies the responsibilities of the positions and recognizes the worth of lay leadership; it also gives an opportunity for the congregation to pledge its loyalty and support. When this is done year after year, a new sense of stewardship comes into the life of the church; and talent, time, energy, and life will be given in consecrated service in the Kingdom of God.

CHAPTER VII

MEMBERSHIP DEPARTMENT

THOSE who belong to the committee guiding the membership department will be "shepherds of the flock," and there is no function of the church more important or more rewarding. To guide members of the church into a richer fellowship, to bring them to a sense of "at-homeness" in the family of God, to discover and enlist their talents in the service of the church, and to bring new members into a vital relationship in their new "citizenship with the saints" is a task that calls for devoted service and the wise use of spiritual abilities. Those who lead in this function should strive to see that not one sheep is lost.

It lies within the possibility of any church to double its influence and power through the proper enlistment of its membership. When we are told by Bert Wilson, in his book, *Know Your Local Church,* that 39 per cent of the church membership attends regularly, 14 per cent only occasionally, and that 47 per cent seldom, if ever, attends, we are faced with the urgent responsibility of the membership department.

The mortality in church membership is appalling. We work ever so hard to enlist people in church membership, but seem to be unconcerned about the people who drop out of church activity. Floyd Allan Bash, pastor of Central Church, San Antonio, Texas, made a survey a few years ago, covering the years from 1922 to 1932. It revealed that our brotherhood had 666,919 professions of faith in that decade, but that we made a net gain of only 337,545. We suffered a loss of 329,374 during that same period—people who dropped out of the family of God. The function of the membership department is to save these people to the Kingdom of God. Those who direct this work are saving

the souls of men and have within their hands the possibility of doubling the power and influence of the church.

Personnel of the Membership Committee

The personnel of the membership committee is very important. It should be broadly representative of the social groups of the church and should be interested in all phases of church work; it should have a keen interest in people and should have diversity of talents. There will be people to greet, records to keep, calls to make, fellowship programs to plan, and organizational work to do. The membership committee has a noble work to do, and it should come to its task with high purposes and serious intentions.

The Meaning of Church Membership

One of the first responsibilities of the membership committee will be to enhance the meaning of church membership. If we are to judge by their actions, many people think that there is no responsibility in church membership. The Christian life needs to be stressed as a growth, a development of character, and a comradeship in great tasks. Emphasis needs to be placed upon the relationships in the Christian life, stressing one's position as a disciple in the school of Christ, a citizen in a kingdom with responsibilities for citizenship, a member of the household of faith with family duties, a son of God with filial obligations. The ministry of the church needs to be magnified in meeting the deepest human needs, in building character to meet the tests of life, in healing the hurts of human hearts, in giving courage for noble living. The essential nature of the church as the body of Christ and the need of a vital fellowship with him should be proclaimed. This committee ought persistently to emphasize the meaning of church membership.

Tasks of the Membership Committee

The membership committee will organize itself to do certain specific things. It will set these things up as its primary func-

tions, study them, become informed in the whole field of church membership, develop plans to meet the needs of the local church, and carry the plans through to achievement. Careful records of the plans and programs of the committee should be kept so that improvements may be made from year to year. Some of the duties of this committee are to keep membership records and check on the activity of the members, promote church attendance, organize plans for membership contact and cultivation, discover and catalogue the talents or abilities of the members, plan for the assimilation of new members in the life of the church, plan for the general social life of the church and promote a friendly family spirit or a sense of "at-homeness" in the church, conduct visitation projects, study cases of membership indifference and attempt remedies, correlate all activities of the church which have fellowship elements, and cooperate in all activities that enhance church loyalties.

Membership Record

The membership committee should compile an adequate record of the church membership. The basic record should be a family card with all members of the family listed. It should give birthdays, the ages of children, the approximate ages of adults, dates of affiliation with the church and how such affiliation was consummated, activities of each person in auxiliaries of the church life, offices held, if a pledge was made to the church, deaths, weddings, and other pertinent information. This record should be kept up to date, with addresses correct and new data added. The church ought to know its families. When a family transfers from the church relationship, this card ought to be filed away and kept permanently.

Separate files may be developed as follows: men, women, young people, boys, and girls. The activity, talent, and experience of each one should be noted. Such records become a handy source of information for groups desiring to extend their membership, for those seeking workers in the church, and for special occasions and activities. These cards represent people—

people with spiritual needs, people whose hearts carry heavy burdens, people who know sorrow, people who long for strength. While they may be classified according to some such categories as "Active," "Semiactive," "Inactive," no person who lives within the reach of the influence of the church ought ever to be dropped. It is just as important to spend time and effort to keep people active as it is to win those who are unsaved to Jesus Christ. They will mean just as much in service, influence, and support. Furthermore, the church ought to account for every person on its rolls: if one drops out, the reason should be found; if one moves away, the church ought to know where and ought to follow that one to stress the importance of uniting with a church near the new home. No church ought to have a nonresident membership. It encourages people in a false relationship and weakens the church in general. Churches ought to teach its members to affiliate where they live, warning them that they will not be held in nonresident membership. Then the church should follow them to insist upon their resident affiliation. The church's accountability to those who trust themselves to its spiritual care is solemn and relentless. The membership committee functions to give a good account of that stewardship.

Church Attendance

The membership committee is responsible for the promotion of attendance. Attending members are growing, interested, helpful members. The committee ought to know the exact situation in the church—just who is active, occasional, and inactive. Records should be kept and tabulations and comparisons made from time to time. Special effort should be made to enlist the attendance of the entire membership on roll-call days, fall Rally Day, World Wide Communion Sunday, and other significant days. Pentecost—the birthday of the church—ought to call for the attendance of every member in appreciation for the church. Attendance ought to be checked on these days. Longer periods may also be used to emphasize attendance. "Registration" cards or slips may be prepared for the purpose of recording at-

tendance during these periods. To start the fall work, October may be designated as "Registration Month." Again, "Church Loyalty Month" may be emphasized during the pre-Easter season or from Easter to Pentecost. Promotion in the church paper, items in the public press, and other publicity will help to make the events significant. A letter to each family, announcing the "Fall Rally" and outlining the fall program will invite enlistment. Similar letters may be sent regarding World Wide Communion Sunday, Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost, together with programs, plans for observance, or other special literature. A visitation or a telephone campaign will also help the attendance on these occasions. Through all this, careful attention will be given to those who are not responding. They are a challenge to the continuing work of the membership committee.

Parish Organization

The membership needs to be organized for oversight and cultivation. This may be done by having geographical parish districts. A dozen to eighteen families may be in a district. A faithful couple ought to be in charge of each area. The membership may be organized by grouping names without giving geographical boundaries. If the latter system is used, the same number of names will be given to a couple. This couple—a husband and wife who are dependable—must accept and carry through the task. The whole thing breaks down when leaders do not function. The geographical districting of a parish is better because it gives a permanency to the field which may be used in other work of the church. Meetings of the parish couple leaders should be held quarterly, reports made, plans announced, and inspiration given. The couple leaders should visit each home at least quarterly, taking materials to new mothers and shut-ins and distributing the program of the church or special educational materials. In short, these leaders give pastoral oversight to their small parish and bring the church into every home. Reports should be made and the information tabulated for reference.

Talents and Abilities

The membership committee will be alert to discover the talents, abilities, and interests of the members of the church. A "talent record" should be maintained. This record would show that a certain member was a pianist, another a vocal soloist, a third an instrumental soloist, and so on. Another type of record that should be kept is an "experience record." Here it would be found that such and such a person had been a schoolteacher, another had served as a scoutmaster, and others had had experience of various kinds that could be put to use in church work. A third type of important information is a "hobby record." These records will be a source of help to all departments of the church in finding leaders and in providing talent for special programs. When people are used they are interested. When they can render a service, they "belong." "Use me or lose me" is a challenge to the membership committee.

New Member Enlistment

The new members become a special responsibility for the membership committee. When they come into the church, they should be cordially welcomed; and for months afterward, or until they have been thoroughly assimilated, they should receive the watchful care of the committee. They may be assigned to individuals or couples, who become sponsors to introduce them at the worship services or other meetings of the church and to enlist them in its organizations. They may be guests of the church and publicly recognized at a dinner meeting. Many churches have special semiannual or annual dinners for new members. It will be well to have a special morning worship service devoted to the new members who have come in during the past year and urge their attendance and seat them in a section. The committee should see that calls are made on new members without delay and that contacts are maintained. The new members should be introduced to organizations in the church and helped to find a place in them. Their talents and abilities should be tabulated and immediately put to use. The

pastor will make a special point to become acquainted with them and will closely watch their progress into the life of the church. Some churches give "membership certificates" and present a packet of helpful materials to each new member. The packet may include material dealing with church membership or devotional booklets or stewardship and missionary material. Some churches give a three- or six-month subscription to a church periodical to all new members. The packet should be presented on a personal visit—preferably by the pastor—and an explanation made of the privileges and responsibilities of church membership. The membership committee can magnify the work of the pastor's membership classes and assist with the children and young people. They may issue a special invitation to the newly baptized to attend the next Communion service and arrange a special pew for them. All these methods help to magnify membership in the church.

Social Life in the Church

The membership committee will plan and develop the social life of the church as a total church family. A visitor to a church of 5,500 members was told by a member of the staff, "No church, large or small, has more of a feeling of one big family than this." Such a situation does not just happen. It is planned, worked for, and persistently followed as a purpose. Each member must feel that he belongs. Auxiliary and organizational loyalties ought to be forgotten in these planned "whole family" experiences. Church-night dinners, Sunday evening after-church socials, a fall roundup, a Christmas party, parish district socials in homes, two or more parish districts meeting together in a summer picnic, and other special projects are examples of "family" events. One large church divided its membership alphabetically and scheduled six midweek dinners, one for each alphabetical group. Every person was introduced. It was an informal family fellowship. Twelve hundred members attended the six dinners. The dinners were an adventure in fellowship. Make the church one big family.

Visitation Projects

The membership committee will plan visitation projects—when the whole membership of the church is touched for a specific purpose. This may be done by the couple leaders or by new people enlisted for this particular project. New visitation teams should be used at intervals. It helps the visitors and increases acquaintance. Visitation may be made to enlist cooperation in special programs, such as the fall roundup, World Wide Communion Sunday, or Pentecost Sunday. Visitation may also be used as a means of stressing education, stewardship, devotional literature, or family religion. Interest in a given program of the church may likewise be secured in this way. There should be a definite and challenging purpose in each project. The visitors will then be glad to do it, and the people will feel that something worthful has been brought to them.

Correlating Social Programs

The membership committee will make a study of the social programs of all departments and auxiliaries of the church. This will be done for the purpose of seeing that each group is evidencing a friendly, winsome, family spirit. It may call all officers or social committees together annually or semiannually and explain the importance of social contacts in each group and the great task they all share together for the good of the church. The committee may offer assistance to auxiliary groups and give counsel or help with materials. It may also aid in making a calendar of social events in the church and further harmonious relationships in this correlation.

Cooperation with Other Departments

The membership committee will cooperate with the leaders of other departments where interests are mutual. This committee has a primary responsibility in certain functions and should cooperate with departments where these functions are of importance. It should seek also to work with the committees

which have a primary responsibility in certain functions where it has an interest. For instance, the membership committee may cooperate with the worship and devotional life department, as they seek to create a warm, friendly, family atmosphere in public worship; or with the education department in trying to enlist people in various educational groups; or with the evangelism department in seeking out and enlisting prospects; or with any department in the distribution of literature in the homes.

In a large church where leadership is available, the various tasks of the membership department may be assigned to subcommittees. They may have separate meetings and report their findings. Certain projects may be assigned to a special committee and the results reported. When subdivisions are made, the work ought to be assembled and reported to the church board as one report. A member of the membership department may occasionally meet with other departments where there is a mutual interest.

In order to carry its functions throughout the life of the church, the membership committee should seek to bring together various groups from time to time to share its aspirations with them. Semiannually or annually, in cooperation with the education department, officers of the church school, women's group, youth fellowship, and other auxiliaries of the church, leaders may be called together to face the problem of inactive members and to make plans for their enlistment in proper groups. Or representatives may be called together for a "Mobilization Month," when every member of every group will be contacted to revitalize the church for a new year. When a special task is contemplated that is related to another department, that department should first be consulted and should share in the planning.

The membership committee ought to have a librarian responsible for the books and materials helpful to its work. Folders on the meaning of church membership and on attendance are available from the Home and State Missions Planning Council and other sources. Other folders along similar lines may be secured. Books which should be read by members of

the committee are: *Know Your Local Church,* by Bert Wilson; *The Art of Church Management,* by C. E. Lemmon; "Church Membership," in *The Church Today and Tomorrow,* by A. R. De Blois; "Use of Records," in *Church Administration,* by A. T. Brooks; *How to Increase Attendance,* by Roger Babson; *The Local Church,* by A. W. Beaven. The minister will suggest other helps which are constantly available. The membership committee should keep a file of materials, plans, and methods. The secretary should keep a file of all letters and materials sent out and of plans completed, with comments on successes and weaknesses.

In the small church the membership committee may assign responsibilities to individuals on the committee and thus carry on a varied program. Certain projects may be chosen as best suited for a particular congregation, or for special emphasis one year, and others for another year. The point is that definite plans should be made to achieve specific results in a given time and responsibility accepted for their accomplishment.

The membership department has a function that lies at the very heart of the power and influence of the church. If all the members of any congregation could be fully enlisted in the program of the church, it would transform the church overnight from a halting and feeble unit of the kingdom into a vital, dynamic, glowing segment of the Kingdom of God.

CHAPTER VIII

WORSHIP AND DEVOTIONAL LIFE DEPARTMENT

ISAIAH "saw the Lord, . . . high and lifted up," and life was never the same to him again. That is the power of worship; to bring people to that experience is the purpose of worship. It is the "practice of the presence of God," and people, through that practice, come to know God as Father, Companion, and Strengthener. In worship—the contemplation of God—one is "transformed into the same image from glory to glory." Worship, therefore, is the highest privilege of the Christian; but it is also the greatest need of the Christian. To guide people to worship—to know the reality of God for themselves, to practice the techniques that enable God to be the supplier of all their needs—is one of the most important functions of the church.

The congregation that worships is a spiritual power house in the Kingdom of God. It radiates a spirit that gives strength to those who come into its fellowship and it has an atmosphere that warms the heart. It is in tune with the Infinite. A worshiping church is a Spirit-filled church.

An individual who worships is in touch with divine resources. His spirit is in fellowship with the Divine Spirit, and he is at home in a universe with God, who is in all and above all. A worshiping individual is exercising the highest human privilege. He is at the point of man's highest upreach and of God's utmost downreach, where God and man meet.

Serious study should be given to the worship function of the church. The hour of public worship should be planned to meet and minister to the varied needs of the people. It is an event fraught with destiny to human hearts, and for the worshipers

life may never be the same again. A waiting congregation comes into the presence of the Eternal, and those who have to do with public worship help to open the doors of the throne room of God.

The Task in the Department

The worship and devotional life committee has important responsibilities. It will study the public services of the church and assist in making them effective. Careful consideration will be given to the music, which contributes in message, beauty, and atmosphere. Ushering, which gives warmth and reverence to the service, will receive attention. All the various parts of the service—the offering, the Communion, the benediction, and others—will be studied. Those who participate—the choir, the elders, and the deacons—will be recognized as a vital factor in achieving a meaningful experience of public worship. The tone and atmosphere created by the physical qualities of the sanctuary and, in fact, everything that pertains to the audience of the people with the Most High come within the province of this committee.

The committee will also give guidance to the devotional life of the membership of the church, stressing the importance of personal religious living and making suggestions about practices and aids. The committee members will study the habits of the people and seek to enrich their lives. This committee will also enrich the religious life of families as units, seeking to aid the homes in making religion a vital factor in family circles. Aids and practices will be suggested and projects planned to help the families of the church. Projects and special events will be planned to stress the importance of worship in the life of the church and to lift the church to new levels of experience. This departmental committee will study the total life of the church and give guidance to a growing experience in worship and spiritual living in all areas of church life. The committee may lead in planning programs of study that will promote the spiritual growth of the congregation. If this worship function

is seriously undertaken and prayerfully carried through, the church will rise to new levels of spiritual power.

Personnel of the Committee

The membership of the committee should be made up of people who have rich qualities of spirituality, who appreciate the value of worship, who know the possibilities of prayer, of Bible reading, of devotional literature, and of the Christian home, and who desire that others may have a richer experience with God. Before they can lead, they must realize the worth of the objectives they seek to reach. Through the study of literature, participation in study courses, observation of rich and effective services, and the cultivation of their own prayer lives, these leaders will become the means of helping the entire congregation.

The Minister and Worship

In this area of church life, as in others, the minister is the key person. He sets the tone and ideals of the church in worship. If he manifests a high regard for the opportunities of worship, and if by careful planning and reverent approach to these holy privileges he creates an attitude of awareness and expectation in his people, they will come to holy and God-touched experiences. He can do much to give a sense of solemn dignity to every approach to the presence of God. Following his leadership, the members of the choir, the elders and deacons in the Communion service, and the ushers in creating the atmosphere of the service, will enter into a reverent appreciation of the significance of the hour. Together they will lift the worship to a high experience for all who share in it. This is a divinely given obligation for the minister, and he will seek to share his aspirations with the committee, and they will plan to inspire the membership of the church to a new appreciation of spiritual living.

Public Worship

The most important hour in the whole week for the church is the hour of worship. Here, seeking souls, in company with

others, look up into the face of God—souls hungering for certainty or sick from sin, souls burdened with cares or buffeted by circumstances, souls heartbroken by sorrow or beaten by the vicissitudes of life. Here, little children eager with wonder, youth beginning to doubt, and adults settling down to complacency foregather to commune with God. It is God's hour to speak to their hearts. Some will glimpse the glory of God, and life will never be the same to them again.

The committee interested in this function of the church needs to appreciate the significance of this hour and, under the guidance of the minister, study its needs, its weaknesses, and its opportunities. The approach to the service is most important. The sanctuary should speak of the presence of God. The early arrivals should find ushers ready to greet them warmly, graciously, but quietly and reverently. The ushers should help people to know that this hour is primarily for audience with God and not for social contacts or weekly visiting; however, warm friendliness should not be lost. It will help if the organ is playing early and the moments of waiting are enhanced by quiet music. Then comes the time to begin. The organ sounds the preparation, the choir enters in the processional, the minister takes his place, the audience stands to join in the singing of the processional or stands reverently in prayer; together they address God in the call to worship and wait before him in the invocation. The portals of the Throne Room are open, and an expectant, worshiping people are in the presence of God. It is a dramatic moment. It should be impressive and significant.

The congregation ought to be impressed with the importance of this opening moment. Ushers ought gently to clear the foyers before this time, and the people ought to be urged to come on time. A desire to be in place and an eagerness to participate in that holy, expectant opening moment ought to be created in a congregation.

Being in the presence of God, one feels the impulse to praise him through hymn, responsive reading, or anthem. Then, a sense of humility prompts one to pray and to recognize God's

salvation for sins in the Communion. Appreciation of his Gift leads to self-giving, symbolized in the offering, which should be the expression of sacrificial fellowship in His sacrificial death. One moves on then to the lifting of his needs, to the contemplation of the attributes or goodness of God, or to the challenge to service which is expressed in the Scripture and sermon. Then one comes to dedication—the alignment of life with God—in the hymn of dedication and the quiet moments of mediation; and, finally, to God's blessing in the benediction. "I saw the Lord, . . . high and lifted up. . . . Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts. . . . I am a man of unclean lips. . . . Thy sin [is] forgiven. . . . Whom shall I send? . . . Here am I; send me" (Isa. 6:1-8). People have been in the presence of God; he has spoken to their hearts; they go out to meet life again, and he is with them. No hour in all the week is like that. It is God's hour.

In order to make the most of this hour, the worship committee will give thought and planning to every part of the service. The committee will aid the minister, and he will aid them. He will share his aspirations with them, and they will help to realize them. They will counsel with all who are responsible for any part of the service, so that they may have common ideals and objectives. All who participate must work together in a common mind and with a single purpose.

MUSIC IN WORSHIP

The music is an important part of worship. It is the "language of the soul" and creates an atmosphere, produces a mood, expresses a message, and lifts the spirit. The organist is a leader of worship and should woo the hearts of the people to God with great spiritual music and with bits of familiar hymns that let God shine through. An organist who has the "feel" of the service can add greatly with quiet music during prayer, in intervals of silence, and at other suitable moments. There is no place for the concert or for personal display in the hour of worship. The choir is a vital part of the music and helps to set the spiritual tone of the service. The choir members,

too, are leaders in worship and ought to appreciate the high privilege. Their manner should be reverent. They should be robed to minimize individuality and enhance their unity in the task; they are not presenting a performance, but are voicing prayer or praise or a message to God for the congregation. They can add meaning and richness to the service in responses and in weaving in meaningful music during the Communion and offering. The director of the choir and the organist should follow the suggestions of the minister for he is the leader of worship, and there must be unity if the highest result is to be obtained. The worship committee will give every encouragement to the choir. It is helpful for the church to have the choir as guests at a dinner annually and to express appreciation in other ways. Recognition of faithful service may be given in some suitable way on behalf of the congregation. It is important to give consideration to youth choirs. These choirs offer valuable training to children and young people and are of real service to the church. One church has maintained four choirs—high school, junior high, junior, and primary—for years. Youth choirs have enriched the program of the church and have developed the appreciation of the youth of the church for great religious music. Furthermore, the young people have found joy in serving the church. Robes are furnished, an annual choir dinner is given, a regular schedule of services is worked out, and suitable recognition is given for faithful service. The worship committee should also give study to the hymnals that are used throughout the church and encourage graded, educationally sound hymnals in every department. The musical instruments, too, are important and should be such as give dignity to worship.

Ushering in Worship

Ushering is an important function in every church. The ushers act as hosts for the church and create the impression received by visitors. Men with gracious personality, warm friendliness, and good memories should be enlisted as ushers. They should come to know the members of the church and where they

like to sit. They should be able to sight strangers, welcome them, and recognize them when they come again. They should be as alert as is a gracious host in his own home in manifesting a friendly attitude toward all, serving their comfort and tastes, and making them feel at ease. They ought to take the time and interest to study their task, drill themselves in its niceties, and strive always for improvement. They should strive to create a spirit of reverence, welcoming people warmly and in friendliness, without encouraging frivolity or undue visiting.

The Communion

The Communion is the highest spiritual act in worship. That moment when people come to the table at which Jesus is the Host and partake of his life and appropriate his forgiving grace is a high spiritual experience. Here the worship committee has a twofold task: first, to make the Lord's Supper as rich in meaning and as helpful as possible; second, to guide the membership to an appreciation of the meaning and the value of the Lord's Supper. Minister, directors of music, choir, elders, and deacons will combine in unity of purpose and in participation to give meaning to every part of the service. The Communion hymn, the Scriptures used, the prayers, the procession of the deacons, and the handling of the emblems—all should be carefully planned. The elders and deacons may well enter at the beginning of the service, when the audience stands for the choir processional, and then all who participate in the service will be in their places. Scripture verses and a Communion hymn may prepare the congregation for this spiritual fellowship. Immediately following the Communion prayer, the choir may sing a stanza softly, then appropriate Scripture and quiet singing may follow while the congregation is served. Then the choir may sing a stanza or two softly while the table is reset. A variation of the Communion accompaniment, alternating chimes and Scripture and a chorus by the choir, will magnify the Communion as the central act of worship and add meaning to the service.

The worship committee can guide the congregation to a greater appreciation of the Communion by a year-round program. An occasional service may magnify the Communion as the objective of that service. Music, sermon, Scripture—all enhance the Communion. A beautiful basket of flowers may be placed just back of the table, or two red roses may be laid on the white cloth covering to be replaced when the elders re-lay the table. Much can be made of World Wide Communion Sunday. Careful plans should be made for it. A special invitation should be sent to the members or a visitation made. Expect every member to attend. The whole service should center in a world fellowship of Christians at the Lord's table. A candlelight Communion service on the Thursday evening before Easter is a rich experience for the congregation. Such a service will add to the meaning of the Communion at every other observance. It should be a service of quiet meditation made up of familiar hymns, Scriptures, and the Communion itself. The sanctuary ought to be beautifully arranged. A minimum number of candles should be used, and there should be no other light, except perhaps an illuminated cross. A picture of the Lord's Supper or of Christ in Gethsemane should occupy a prominent place. The organ should be playing or a hidden quartet singing as the people arrive. An order of worship may be mimeographed or printed, but the audience does not need to read it. Let the participation be from memory or that of silent meditation; however, everyone in the audience will treasure the program. An "every member Communion" attendance on Pentecost Sunday will help people to appreciate the birthday of the church. Urge attendance; arrange to take the Communion to the shut-ins; have a Communion service at night. Give people cards to sign signifying attendance. Other materials—a statement on the calendar, Communion folders, special bulletins—may be distributed at church, mailed out, or used in visitation during the year to deepen the appreciation for the Communion.

The Offering

The offering, too, is an act of worship and merits thoughtful attention. This act of worship is the outpouring of consecrated life in gratitude and appreciation. It is a tangible act of commitment and is a token of the sacrifice an individual makes in response to the sacrifice of his Lord. Very appropriately, therefore, the offering may follow the Communion. Immediately after the resetting of the Communion table, with suitable Scripture and prayer, the deacons receive the offering trays. A choral sentence, Scripture, organ music, offertory solo, or a stanza sung softly by the choir should lead the meditation in this act of sharing or sacrifice. The offering may close with a sentence or stanza of praise or commitment by the choir or by the congregation.

Various procedures may be followed in receiving the offering. The point is to make this worship experience as vital and significant as possible. How this was achieved in one congregation may be described here as an illustration of the possibilities. At the conclusion of the Lord's Supper, the Communion table was left uncovered while the offering was being received. Two deacons, bearing the offering trays, came forward and stood facing each other before the Communion table for a Scripture sentence, a prayer, and a choral response. Then the deacons laid the offering trays on the Communion table beside the bread and wine, and the elders placed the Communion cloth over them, thus covering together the symbols of Christian sacrifice and the symbols of the sacrifice of Christ.

The offering ought to be a spiritual experience for those who assemble in the house of the Lord.

The Baptismal Service

The worship committee should also make a thorough study of the service of baptism and strive to make it as meaningful as possible to the candidates and a significant experience in the life of the church. Baptism is an act of worship—a declaration of faith in Christ, a dramatization of his redemptive experience,

and a commitment of life in surrender to him. It should be a service of beauty, dignity, and meaning. If the baptismal service is held at the evening worship hour, it should be a vital part of the service, with arrangements made to give significance to it. If held at a special time, music, Scripture, and at least a solo should be woven into a beautiful service.

The baptistry should be arranged impressively. Much can be done, by giving attention to lighting and decorations, to make the baptistry a more meaningful symbol. In this connection, palms and ferns are appropriate. Occasionally a candlelight baptismal service may be held. Baptismal robes should be furnished, preferably white, signifying the cleansing from sin.

Candidates should be carefully prepared for this act of worship. A baptismal register should be signed; passages of Scripture should be read to them; a prayer should be offered; and a brief statement of the meaning of the service should be made. There should also be a simple explanation of the "mechanics" of baptism.

A beautiful evening service may be arranged as follows: as the opening hymn ends, the lights go out; candlelight or a spotlight illumines the baptistry; the choir hums softly; the minister enters the baptistry repeating Scripture, which he continues between the baptism of the several candidates; the choir concludes the service with "Have Thine Own Way, Lord," sung softly; the lights go on; and the rest of the service follows. An impressive baptismal service may be held on Tuesday of Easter week as a means of magnifying this ordinance as Thursday evening of this week has been suggested to magnify the Communion. Palms, flowers, and lighted candles, impressively arranged, may make it a significant service.

The worship committee may also distribute literature, by visitation or by mail, explaining the meaning and significance of baptism. Statements may be put in the church bulletin to guide the whole congregation toward a richer appreciation of this sacred ordinance.

Use of the Bulletin

The worship committee should give study to the church calendar or Sunday bulletin. This is more important than a simple order of worship or a calendar of events. It may be a source of inspiration and spiritual guidance. Whether mimeographed or printed, the announcements should be concise and thus allow space for devotional material. Prayers may be printed, poems may be added, devotional sentences used, and Scripture references given. Let the bulletin preach. People will read it and treasure it through the years.

Consideration should be given to audience participation in the worship. People actually worship only as they share in it. Spectators do not worship; they watch others worship. Responsive readings, hymns in which all sing, and other parts of the service must enlist the voices and hearts of the worshipers. Study the service and the audience and plan for the utmost sharing by individual worshipers.

Personal Devotional Life

The worship committee should study techniques for providing guidance, inspiration, and materials that will aid the individual members in their spiritual growth. Many people are anxious to grow who are not acquainted with available helps or methods. Many realize spiritual needs who have no knowledge of how to meet them. An individual may desire to attain to the position of "a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13), and he may know, in a general way, that "God shall supply every need . . . according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:19); but he must have the help of the church if these ideals are to be realized in his own life. It is the function of this committee to serve the people of the church in their growth toward these objectives of personal living.

We have already considered the place of public worship in ministering to the needs of individuals; but their attendance and participation in this means of growth are essential. The

worship committee, therefore, will have a sympathetic interest in all activities that promote membership attendance and will cooperate with the membership committee in every possible way in its efforts toward this end. Attendance at worship is essential to spiritual growth.

The worship committee will study the growth of Christian personality and the underlying principles of its development, seeking to bring about conditions conducive to growth. The committee members will study materials that will aid an individual in meeting his various needs and will make these materials available. They will study the methods helpful to spiritual development and promote these methods. They will help a person to realize his needs and inspire him to want to meet them.

Guidance in Prayer

The worship committee will give guidance in prayer. The greatest privilege of a Christian is prayer, and it is also the greatest resource. Many people do not know their need of prayer. Neither do they know how to pray. The emphasis upon prayer and its vital power will lead people to pray. Such booklets as *Training the Devotional Life,* available from Home and State Missions Planning Council; *A Way of Prayer,* available from the Federal Council of Churches; *A Technique of Private Prayer;* and other similar material will guide people to a richer experience in prayer.

Bible Reading

People need to be guided in Bible reading. How to read the Bible and how to relate it to the needs of life are persistent questions among sincere people. *How to Read the Bible, Worthwhile Ways of Reading the Bible,* and *My Reading Record* are among helps available from the American Bible Society. The Bible must be made understandable and it must become a companion in daily life if it is to be meaningful in Christian growth. A practice that is rewarding is that of designating certain periods in which each member of the congregation is urged to

read a particular book of the Bible—Matthew during December, leading up to Christmas; Luke, leading up to Easter; Acts, leading up to Pentecost; and other books during other specified periods. The use of "penny portions" given to members will help. Emphasis upon the whole church reading together will encourage participation. Sermons preached from texts found in the book that is being read during a given month will add interest and value to the project. Set the congregation to reading the Bible.

Daily Devotional Material

The practice of a devotional period in the daily life of each individual should be encouraged, and materials should be provided for such periods. *Hearthstone,* the *Upper Room, Today,* and other devotional guides are available. People are glad to purchase these helps when they discover their value. These materials may be used in the visitation of shut-ins and may be provided for patients in the hospital. In these crisis experiences, such helps will meet a definite need. Sorrow and other testing experiences may be doorways to God's resources; and devotional materials, easily available, will help to appropriate these resources.

A constant study should be made of the increasing wealth of devotional material. The latest and best should always be on hand for the members of the congregation.

Corporate Services for Personal Devotions

There are public services which will contribute to personal enrichment. These services should be sponsored by the worship committee. A service of meditation, with music, Scripture, and hymns, in a sanctuary glowing with mellow candlelight on Christmas Eve is one which will evoke an appreciative response. Families should be encouraged to come together. The candlelight Communion service during Easter week is a source of personal enrichment.

At some point in these inspiring public services provision should be made to lead the people in a period of meditation. We need to learn to worship silently and to listen for the message that God would speak to us as we reverently wait before him.

Prayer Chapel

A special prayer chapel in the church will inspire people in personal devotion. It should be truly a "holy place." The pictures, lighting, and atmosphere should be such as to create the sense of God's presence. Devotional material should be on a table for those who desire it. A parlor may serve the purpose of a prayer chapel when it is not otherwise needed, but it should be carefully arranged to give it the atmosphere of a place of prayer.

Arrangements may be made for special periods of individual prayer at the church, the people coming at will, not to participate in a program, but to engage in personal prayer. A day may be set in the early fall for prayer for the church program. Make it a sacred fellowship in prayer for the church. The Friday before Palm Sunday may be likewise used for prayer that the church may have a spiritual uplift during Easter week, prayer also being offered for the salvation of souls at this special time.

A rich experience may be provided for Pentecost by setting aside ten days prior to Pentecost Sunday as an "upper room" fellowship commemorating the ten days of prayer. A chart may be prepared weeks ahead, marked in half-hour periods for twelve hours of the day. Participants are asked to write their names in the half-hour period that they will spend in the "upper room" in prayer and meditation. The purpose is to get a different person for each half hour, but more may come. No program need be arranged. Each person may come, read some material to be found on the table, pray, meditate, read the Bible, and serve himself Communion. Devotional booklets, prayer tracts, and a Bible may be placed on one table and a Communion tray on another. A picture may be arranged as a worship center, with

candles before it. Significant plans may thus be made for a church-wide observance of Pentecost, with the ten days of prayer as a vital part of it.

Family Religious Life

The family is the basic unit in society. What happens in the home is built into individual character, the church, the community, and civilization. God's first religious unit was the family. The old family altar is no longer a part of the family furniture, but the need remains, and the values are important. The modern home needs to discover a way to make religion natural and vital in the affairs of everyday home life. The task of the worship committee is to suggest ways to do that and to provide materials to assist in its achievement.

A Holy Place

One such method is to encourage homes to establish a "holy place." This "holy place" may be in a niche in the house, where a table, with a Bible on it, may be placed. Candles may also be arranged on the table and may be lighted on certain occasions. Another type of "holy place" is a shelf where devotional literature and religious papers are kept. Whatever the type, the "holy place" becomes the Christian center of the house, giving silent testimony to the values of Christianity. The arrangement of the "holy place" may be changed for special seasons—Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter—to emphasize the particular significance of the holiday being observed.

Family Aids

The worship committee will encourage the use of devotional booklets in the families of the congregation. Grace at meals, or family devotions at meals, will also be encouraged. Helpful booklets, containing prayers and suggestions, may be provided. In this connection, *How to Conduct Family Worship at the Table,* available from the publishers of the *Upper Room,* will be

found helpful. Bible reading may be encouraged by providing such helps as *The Bible in the Home,* available from the American Bible Society. The practice of listening to religious broadcasts as a family may be encouraged by publishing the time of the broadcasts in the church calendar. Insistence upon families making plans for Christian fellowship together at stated intervals—weekly or monthly—will produce results.

Holiday Observance

Materials may be furnished to aid the family in observing the church holidays in a truly Christian manner. A service may be prepared to be used in the family circle on Thanksgiving Day, or suggestions may be made for the home observance of a Christian Christmas. *Christmas in the Home,* a pamphlet available from the Home and State Missions Planning Council, and *The Family Worships at Home,* available from the Ohio Christian Missionary Society, will give rich guidance in the observance of these special days. Helps may be prepared by the local church —mimeographed or printed—and distributed to the families of the congregation. *The Fellowship of Prayer,* available from the Federal Council of Churches, will help the family in observing the pre-Easter season.

Christian Family Week

The whole church may be led to participate in the emphasis upon the family during Christian Family Week in May. The materials and suggestions of the International Council of Religious Education and the materials of the Department of Religious Education of the United Christian Missionary Society will help to build a significant program for the week. A sermon on the family on the first Sunday of May, a "family night" at home on one night, a "family night" at the church on Wednesday evening, with a dinner and a program that will interest the whole family, and then a suitable climax on Mother's Day will provide a meaningful program for the week. A display of

salable books, pamphlets, and folders on the family will meet a need.

Plans may be made, as a part of this week, or at some other time, for a "family life institute." The local church should secure a capable leader for this purpose. Resources will be made available in the institute, problems will be discussed, and emphasis will be placed upon the importance of the family.

Cooperation with Other Departments

The worship committee will seek to lead in its functions in all areas of church life. It has a primary responsibility in this field. However, it will recognize that other departments have interests in various phases of the work. The education department is interested in training in worship and in the cultivation of the family. It may seek the cooperation of the education committee, therefore, in conducting classes in worship and thus enrich the worship program of the whole church. Or it may inaugurate a school or a series of classes in Bible study, personal religious living, prayer life, making a home Christian, Christian marriage for young people, problems of Christian living, and many others that would enrich the life of the congregation. The worship committee may call together all those in the church who have to do with worship or devotions in any auxiliary group —church school, women's work, youth work, children's work—so that they may look at the common task together and share some common purposes.

Organization of the Committee

The worship committee may divide its responsibilities, assigning certain tasks or definite projects among subcommittees. In a large church, personnel will be available for this. In a smaller church, however, individuals may be assigned segments of the work. If subcommittees work on segments of the program they should report to the whole committee. The committee should then assemble all the reports and condense them into one fairly brief document for presentation to the church board. The committee

will need a secretary, who will keep minutes of the meetings, of the plans made, and an evaluation of the plans as they unfold. Samples of materials used, letters sent, and other available materials should also be kept. The committee should have a librarian to assemble materials and books for the use of the committee and to encourage reading by its members. Some helpful books are as follows: *Plain Thoughts on Worship,* by E. A. Goldsworthy; *The Fine Art of Conducting Public Worship,* by A. W. Blackwood; *Religious Living,* by Georgia Harkness; *Prayer,* by G. A. Buttrick; *Reality in Worship,* by W. L. Sperry; *The Art of Group Worship,* by R. S. Smith; *The Home and Christian Living,* by P. R. and M. H. Hayward; These pamphlets, obtainable from the Federal Council of Churches, will be found helpful: *Religion and the Home, Christian Marriage, Six Tests of Marriage. Worship and the Devotional Life* and *The Church and the Christian Family,* pamphlets obtainable from the Home and State Missions Planning Council, are equally helpful. The minister will have other resources available and other materials to suggest.

In the small church a committee may choose certain phases of these suggestions to emphasize and gradually lead the congregation into an aggressive program. The program in a small church may be just as rich and inspiring as that in a large church. It is not the size that makes the difference; the thing that counts is a willingness to take responsibility, to study, to catch a vision, and to translate plans into Christian character.

The functions of the worship and devotional life department are basic responsibilities of the church. Those who guide and work at these responsibilities are building spiritual power in the church, helping individuals to find reality and strength in their religion, and giving stability and solidarity to families. It is a task that challenges one's best and that will prove to be most rewarding in its achievements.

CHAPTER IX

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

THE function of education is inherent in the very structure of the church. Jesus said, "Go: . . . teaching them." As we think of the work of the church and the functions that must be performed, teaching is imperative and inescapable. Jesus went about teaching. He called disciples and taught them. In obedience to the divine command, they gave attention to teaching. They emphasized the teaching function in enumerating the responsibilities of the first officers. The church has always been strong when its teaching function was foremost. Local churches are strong when they give emphasis to the educational work of the church.

It must be recognized, however, that the church's educational responsibility derives, not simply from its own internal needs, but even more so from the crying needs and evident ills of the world at large. The secularization of society, the conflicts and tensions in civilization, the breakdown of homes, and the decay of character challenge the educational program of the church. A world in which every secular force has failed to solve its problems challenges the church to heal its hurts. When modern transportation, commerce, invention, communication, and education have failed to stem the drift toward conflict and chaos, the church is challenged once again to demonstrate the power that will hold the world together. Facing such a world today, as he did years ago, Jesus would repeat with ringing emphasis, "Go: . . . teaching them."

Just as the little red schoolhouse has been the cradle of democracy and the inspiration of each generation to conserve the ideals that make democracy possible, so the local church is the fountain of Christian character and life to meet the needs

of the world. Here little children have their minds filled with the eternal truths of God and their impressionable souls imprinted with the character of Christ. Here young people are inspired to enlist in the service of the King and give themselves to making a new world wherein dwelleth righteousness. Here men and women find courage and inspiration to walk in the Way and give themselves to answer the prayer which Jesus taught, "Thy kingdom come . . . on earth." It is in the local church—the church where we teach, whether it be large or small —that the Kingdom of God is built. If it does not happen here, it does not happen. If it does happen here, the kingdom has come—to that extent and in that proportion. That is the task of the committee that leads the department of education. Workers at the Lord's great tasks, ministers to the needs of a tragic world, builders of the kingdom in the hearts of men—that is the function of this department.

Objectives of Education

The education department will be guided in its functions by certain broad major objectives. These will be constant guides in outlining the work, developing methods, and choosing materials and equipment. These objectives will be the frame of reference against which to define responsibilities, determine needs, and evaluate achievements. There are three objectives: (1) To bring people to an effective Christian life. This means to hold out before them the Christian ideal and help them by inspiration, teaching, and fellowship to grow toward the ideal. (2) To bring people to membership and active participation in the church. The goal will be to win people to Christian faith and commitment, and then to inspire and train them in active responsibility and participation in the work of the church. (3) To discover and develop leaders for the program of the church. The church must have leaders trained for the tasks of the kingdom, and people must have their abilities developed and consecrated to those tasks. These objectives will always be the inspiration and challenge of the education committee, and they

give to this department a responsibility that means the effectiveness or the ineffectiveness of the church and the progress or the stagnation of the Kingdom of God.

Tasks of the Education Committee

The education committee will be responsible for the educational ideals and objectives in the whole church and will provide inspiration for the realization of these ideals and objectives. It will formulate plans and guide in the achievement of goals in those areas of church life where it has primary responsibility. In those areas of church life where other departments have primary responsibility, it will cooperate in a joint effort to realize mutual aims.

The education committee should make a survey of the total educational needs of the church and should form a clear conception of how those needs may be met. It should always be cognizant, however, that other departments have the responsibility of meeting some of these needs. It will have primary responsibility in guiding various phases of the educational program—the church school, with its range of opportunity from the nursery throughout adult life; the vacation school and weekday religious education; the expressional activities of young people, such as young people's societies, conference clubs, boy scouts, cub scouts, girl scouts, and campfire girls. It will cooperate in the educational phases of the programs of those departments whose primary responsibility is evangelism, worship and devotional life, missions, membership, and finance and stewardship.

The total work of the church is educational, but there must be a clear understanding as to the areas in which the education committee will function with primary responsibility. All departments should cooperate fully in attaining objectives for the advancement of the whole church.

Personnel of the Education Committee

The membership of the education committee is of great importance. Its personnel should be made up of men and women

of recognized ability and of high standing in the congregation. They should understand something of sound educational methods and should be willing to give careful study to the work. They must be in sympathy with the educational program of the church and desire its improvement. They must be men and women who recognize the significance of education for the church of Christ and who are willing to give to it the attention it merits. The individuals of the committee should have a special interest, coupled with experience, in some particular area of the committee's task; one will have an especial interest in children's work, another in youth activities, another in missions, another in stewardship, and so on; yet they should all be able to see the whole task of the church and bring their contribution to that total task. The leadership of this basic function of the church merits the best that the church can provide.

The committee that heads the education department should be appointed by the church board, as are the other committees. It may act as an executive committee to consider matters of personnel and problems or tensions which ought to be handled by a small group. For the general educational program, however, in addition to the committee appointed by the board, heads of various groups in the education department may be members of the committee by virtue of their office. These may include the church school superintendent, the president of the women's council, the counselor of the youth group, youth officers, the president of the men's work, the chairman of the children's work, the sponsor of the boy scouts, and other such officers. These officers serve on the committee in a liaison capacity, reporting the educational work of their organizations to the committee and taking back to their organizations the plans and policies formulated in the committee. This is one way to form a committee that will make a constructive and unified program of education in the church.

Another plan is to have, in addition to the membership of the committee appointed by the church board, those persons who have functional responsibilities in education through age-level

groups. These would include the church school superintendent, the superintendent of leadership education, the superintendent of the children's division of the church, the superintendent of the youth division of the church, the superintendent of the adult division of the church, and the person who superintends those phases of educational work in the church school in which primary responsibility is in another department, such as missions, evangelism, or stewardship. These superintendents would be liaison officers, interpreting the needs of their several areas to the total committee and carrying out the plans and programs formulated in the total committee and adopted by the board. They would relate the plans to, and make them effective in, the various areas in which they had responsibility.

A plan which has worked very successfully in one church provides for an education committee made up of the committee appointed by the church board, to which is added, by virtue of their office, the heads of all departments in the church school, the presidents of all organized classes, the sponsors of youth organizations, and president of the women's council. This made a large committee, but it provided an opportunity for all leaders of organizations to help formulate the program, and each person understood why plans were adopted and had a personal interest in seeing them achieved. This representative group unified the work of the church and gave a strong educational undergirding to all phases of the church's task.

It must be understood that the same general principle obtains in each of the three procedures which have just been suggested for forming the education committee. That principle may be stated thus: the personnel which heads the various organizations of the church in which education is an important function must be on the committee which formulates the policies and plans which the organization heads are expected to carry out. Their offices carry these responsibilities. The committee appointed by the church board has the responsibility of correlating all these organizations and leading them in a sound educational program

that will advance the whole church. The pastor will serve as an ex officio member of this committee, unless there is a minister of education, in which case these two should agree on their respective responsibilities to the education committee.

The Church School

The church school is a primary responsibility of the education committee. Careful study of the organization of the school, its teaching personnel and the training of that personnel, the records of the membership of the school, the materials and equipment with which they work, and the policies for guiding the program of the school will be the responsibilities of the education committee. Enlisting people to carry the various tasks, inspiring them to the highest possible ideals, training them for their tasks, and maintaining the school at its most effective level will constantly engage the committee's attention. This task is one of the most important functions of the church.

Church School Records

Records are important. They should be made with care and kept in a systematic manner. First of all, particular pains should be taken to see that newcomers are enrolled in the proper departments and classes. It is equally important to see that provisions are made for the effective use of the records by the school and its constituent groups.

There should be an enrollment secretary for the school, who will secure the required information from each enrollee and see that this information is properly classified. The information should be made available to the proper department or class, to the evangelism department (if the enrollee is not a member of the church), to the women's council or a youth group or whatever auxiliary will have an especial interest in the new pupil. If this is the enrollee's first contact with the church, as is often the case, every effort should be made to enlist this person in the total church life.

Complete and up-to-date records should be kept for each child. One church prepared an 8½″ × 11½″ file for each child, and in this was placed a record card 8″ × 11″, marked off for a progressive record for twelve years. (See pages 210f.) Facts about the child, the family, important public school facts, church school facts, hobbies, abilities, activities, and achievements were recorded on this card through the years. It became a valuable record of the child's life. In this file were placed evaluations by teachers made at the end of each year; attitude, biblical information, and other tests given from time to time; reports of projects in which the child had participated and his responses to them. The church school should keep more complete records and make a better educational use of them.

Church School Attendance

Attendance should be a major concern of the education committee. The interest here is not that of parading large figures that indicate phenomenal growth; rather it is the recognition of the fact that the opportunities to do a constructive work with individuals exist only when those individuals attend the classes in which this effort is made. Reasons for careless attendance should be known, and efforts should be made to overcome them. One junior high department kept an accurate check on reasons for absence for one quarter and found some illuminating facts. No person should be dropped from the rolls without definite reasons. The easy unconcern often manifested in culling the rolls simply because people have not attended for a quarter or for six months is inexcusable. The fact that they have come to the church school places a responsibility on the school; and as long as they are in the community and unattached, they remain a responsibility. The rolls represent people, and people are souls, and the church exists to win and guide people to become active Christians. The nonattenders in the church family and the unreached in the community should constantly challenge the attention of the education committee.

Materials and Equipment

The materials to be used in the church school will be important. A careful study should be made of all available materials for use in Christian education, and the very best should be procured. Enough materials should be available. It is a tragic economy to handicap teaching by the lack of a few things that would make for greater interest and effectiveness. The educational budget should be large enough to do constructive work. Occasional institutes or classes should be held in which available materials are displayed and the best use to make of them explained. Teachers may be encouraged to visit other church schools, to study church school catalogues, to attend departmental institutes, and to pursue any other means that may increase their knowledge of materials and methods.

Equipment has an educational value in itself. The rooms in which classes meet are teachers, and the atmosphere and tone of these rooms have character-forming effect. Many church school classrooms are untidy and are detrimental to effective work. Pupils judge the importance of a school by the plans that have gone into its making. Departmental worship rooms should have meaningful and beautifully arranged worship centers. The best possible furniture should be used. Pews will add dignity to a worship room. Hymnals should be educationally evaluated; and, in each instance of selection, the age level of the group that will use the hymnal should be considered. Classes should have pictures on the walls—and nothing but the best. Every education committee cannot have a new building; but with constructive planning across the years, the building which they do have can be brought to its highest peak of effectiveness.

Visual education is making rapid progress. The public school is finding it most effective. The church must not lag behind. Prints of great pictures are so easily available that every church can become a center of religious art and every room have its message. The education committee should superintend the selection of pictures. Any church can have a museum of

biblical articles—a miniature tabernacle, household articles mentioned in the Bible, and other items with religious significance. These give added meaning and life to Bible teaching. Film slides are available—at small cost—of the geography of the Bible, of Bible incidents, and of modern missionary fields. The use of these will vitalize teaching and bring modern methods into Christian education. A splendid array of motion picture films is being produced, graphically portraying Bible stories. This field of visual education should be explored by the education committee, and materials should be made available for use.

Teaching and Leadership Improvement

The teaching program of the church school is the very center of the task. Constant attention must be given to enlisting the best persons for this function. They should be carefully selected and impressed with the greatness of their opportunity. Here they work with God's eternal message upon immortal souls. Here they fashion character that shall last through life. Here they impart knowledge that builds attitudes, give inspiration that determines decisions, and unfold visions that make for destiny. Here they teach young life that shall guide business, preside over courts, sit in legislative halls, make and unmake nations. What a teacher does with a class of boys in a little church school may some day determine what happens in a place of high responsibility.

Opportunities for training and improvement should be made available to all who accept the responsibilities of a church school teacher. It is unfair for a church to enlist a person to teach, and then not provide materials and equipment for the task and guidance in the work. A library should be available, with books and helps pertaining to all the phases of the school. Magazines and other helps should be available to every teacher. If possible, experienced supervisors should help new teachers become acquainted with their work, with resources for improvement, and help them in the actual teaching. Many teachers become discouraged and valuable leaders are lost because proper

introduction was not given to the work. Encouragement and financial help should be given teachers to attend institutes, conferences, and schools. People enjoy doing a thing that they feel they are doing well, and the church should give every assistance in aiding teachers to enjoy a task well done.

Leadership education is a part of the responsibility of the education committee. A constructive program to enable teachers to meet their responsibilities is essential in the church school. Informal education may be carried on in individual conferences —the sharing of books, magazine articles, or helpful plans. Group education can be carried on effectively. One junior faculty studied the book, *The Junior Department of the Church School,* by Una Riddick Smith, in their monthly conference. For twelve months they devoted one hour to this study and one hour to departmental plans. Another junior department superintendent qualified herself to teach the unit and led her teachers in a study course during the fall months. Each department was greatly helped.

A series of separate classes may be set up for leaders and held at different times to suit the groups. A leadership school, held annually, either by a single church or by the churches of a given community will prove to be a great benefit. Special training classes may be held at the church school hour for prospective teachers. A realization of the needs, and a determination to meet the needs, will open the way for training classes. Every church ought to strive to have accredited teachers; that is, teachers who have manifested enough appreciation of the significance of their task to do some formal study for improvement.

A formal installation of the faculty of the church school in a public service of the church will dignify the task. Some churches ask teachers to sign formal "contracts" for the year. This printed form carries a list of the responsibilities of a teacher, such as attendance and cooperation in department and school, and offers suggestions for improvement. The "contract" also declares the church's intent to furnish helps and support. When this serious acceptance of the task is stressed at the in-

stallation, the church as a whole comes to see education in a new light. Some churches have a printed "commission" which they present to the teacher. Like the "contract," it also outlines certain responsibilities of the teacher. The installation service, with the whole faculty present, pledging themselves to be faithful to their task, will lift the place of education in the thinking of the church.

Church School Relationships

The church school should be church centered. The faculty of the school and others in places of leadership should be loyal to the church and its services. The church worship is the central hour of all church life, and all leaders should be faithful in precept and influence. The church is central to the Christian program, and all auxiliaries are but groups within the church. The teacher who is unfaithful to worship is misleading those whom he teaches. Classes that do not place their loyalty to the church first are unfaithful to the church. All activity and all teaching should build the church.

Specific occasions and definite periods may be set aside for a special emphasis on church loyalty. Special emphasis by groups on attendance on Christmas Sunday, Pentecost Sunday, and other special events will inspire continuing church loyalty. Departments or classes may be invited to the sanctuary as "guests" on several Sundays preceding Easter, each department or class sitting in a reserved section on the Sunday when its members are "guests." In this arrangement, the members of the junior department may be the "guests" on Palm Sunday, which is Decision Day. This plan offers an excellent opportunity to stress church loyalty. Some constructive program of church loyalty ought to be fostered throughout the church school. It is an integral part of a program of education.

Parent-teacher relationships ought to be sponsored. Parents are often unaware of ways in which they can cooperate to make the church school program more effective. They would do anything possible to help their children, but sometimes they do not

appreciate the value of Christian education or do not know the underlying purposes of the school. Departmental conferences should be held with parents, explaining the courses of study, the ideals of Christain character, and the facilities and programs of the church to make these ideals effective. An annual conference of this kind can be very helpful.

A preschool mothers' club may be organized as a part of the nursery department, with monthly meetings for the mothers, for the purpose of studying religious growth, how habits are formed, and kindred subjects. Another possibility is to organize a parents' club in connection with a junior department. Meetings may be held quarterly to discuss the program of the school, the problems of parents, and cooperative relationships. Several mothers and fathers may be invited to the department each Sunday until all have attended. These plans will develop a fine spirit of understanding and cooperation.

In cooperation with the other departments involved, the education committee will study the educational needs of the school in worship and devotional life, in evangelism, in stewardship, in missions, and in fellowship. This committee should aid the program of those who have primary responsibility in these departments.

The school trains in worship, and leaders in worship should have the best materials available and should be trained in leading worship. The environment should be conducive to worship, the hymnals and other materials should meet the highest educational standards, and the worship should be meaningful and should fit into the ideals for the total church. The school leaders should cooperate fully in the effort to enrich the devotional life of individuals. They should know what is being planned and enlist the members in various groups in participation. In these ways the work of the worship and devotional life department will be aided.

The school should cooperate to the fullest extent with the evangelism department in securing names of prospective church

members in stressing the meaning of church membership, and in putting a special emphasis upon decision days. An evangelistic spirit should pervade all departments of the school.

Training in stewardship is important to the proper understanding of the Christian life and will be a part of a well-rounded educational program. The education department will therefore seek to have fellowship in the objectives of the finance and stewardship department and will carry forward this emphasis in every possible way. A study should be made of the budget of the church, and an effort should be made to lead members of the school to a Christian attitude toward the support of the church and the use of their money.

Christianity is world wide, and missionary emphasis is imperative to right growth in Christian living. In cooperation with the missions department, a constructive educational program should be an integral part of the school.

Missions, stewardship, and evangelism are not "invasions" of the church school area; they are a part of total education. Christian people must meet their obligations to society, and social education should be a part of the program. All of these important functions are the major responsibility of other departments, but the education committee should welcome the opportunity to help make the church a great unified school in Christian growth and development.

The fellowship activities of the church school classes and departments will be varied and well promoted. Class parties, dinners, picnics, and similar events are a vital part of their program and should be emphasized as such. While these activities will be promoted by the classes and departments themselves, the education committee should be alert to see that no group fails to provide suitable and adequate fellowship opportunities. In addition to these group functions, the education committee will also be concerned with those social activities that relate to the whole church and will seek to enlist the cooperation of church school groups in them.

Meeting and Conference

The education committee should meet monthly for conference and planning. The great objectives of the educational program, the progress made, and the work of the various areas of the program should constantly engage its attention. The committee should discuss policies, and how to attain their goals; plans, and how to achieve them; weaknesses, and how to overcome them. The budget will engage their attention when necessary from time to time. A subcommittee or an auditor ought to be appointed to assist the treasurer in handling the items of the budget, so that details of bills need not take the time of the committee. In a large church, the committee may be divided into subcommittees to perform various functions; but in a smaller church, individuals may be assigned to the several phases of work.

The committee should sponsor a monthly workers' conference. This conference will generate inspiration and zeal which will be felt throughout the whole church. All departmental workers and all officers of various classes ought to attend, in fact, all who are interested in the educational program of the church. The conference is vitally important to the progress and the unity of the school. The work of the total school is held before the workers, and the departments have a chance to see their responsibility in it.

Religious Education Week

Religious Education Week should be used for church-wide emphasis upon the significance of the educational task of the church. It is usually observed the last week of September, but another time may be chosen for it. Weeks will be spent in preparation for it and processes set in motion throughout the whole church to focus attention on it. Rechecking the membership rolls, mobilizing each department or class, studying materials and equipment, conducting an annual "housecleaning," are some of the activities that may be included in the preparation for this special period. The week may be

opened with a public recognition of the faculty at the morning worship on the first Sunday. Some night during the week a church-wide dinner, with the faculty as guests, may be followed by an "open house" for all departments of the school. All departments should make special preparation for the "open house," some features of which may be a display of lesson materials, handwork, and other projects of interest. All the events and activities of the week should in some way lead up to the climax of Rally Day on the second Sunday. This week can be one of the most significant events of the church year.

We have given consideration to the function of the education department in relation to the church school, but that is only a phase of the total educational responsibility in this department. It is a major responsibility, it is true, and of vital importance; but other phases of its task will also engage the attention of this committee. Various extended activities build character and offer opportunities for expression and training; they should be related to the education committee by the sponsors or leaders. The leaders will see their place in the total work of the church and find increased value in their activity as it fits into the whole program.

Extended Educational Activities

The Sunday evening youth groups are a vital part of the educational program, offering not only study opportunities to enrich life, build character, and face the problems of Christian living, but also training in service, in youth leadership, and in actual experience in the work of the church. Their members will be, for the most part, the same young people who are in the church school; therefore, this should be an extended and correlated program. They should have wise counselors, but the program should be largely in the hands of the young people themselves. It should be related to the total program of the church and to the brotherhood program, so that a sense of unity and loyalty is developed. The groups are members of one church, and their relationships and activities should contribute to their sense of participation and growth in the church.

Material for study should help these young people to grow in an understanding of the meaning of church membership, in personal religious living, in a knowledge of social problems, and in brotherhood life. Materials for organizational procedures, suggestions for study, programs for fellowship, and guides in service are available and should be used in organizing youth work. Many churches provide for a monthly or a weekly snack supper, a recreational period, followed by the worship and discussion. This makes an interesting Sunday evening. Some follow the forum plan for programs and build discussions around interests or needs. The education committee should take an active interest in these groups and make them a vital part of the church program.

The expanded session offers a vital educational opportunity, where capable leadership is available. Study, fellowship, and expressional activities are here provided for the children during the church hour. This provides for more than fifty-two hours of education during the year, giving an opportunity to build character more fully than is possible in the church school alone. Kindergarten and primary children readily respond to this added program. Handwork, informal worship, expressional activities, visual education—all may be used to advantage in the expanded session.

Some churches have "junior church" for juniors at the church worship hour. This should be developed into a real "church," one that will guide the children in understanding and in appreciation of the church. A junior choir, junior deacons, and other participation of the children themselves will enrich the program. Occasional fellowship should be planned in the regular church service, so that the children may relate their training to the church. Some churches observe a formal graduation from the "junior" into the "senior" church.

Boy scouts, girl scouts, campfire girls, and cub scouts are character-building organizations; when related to the church, they should be closely woven into the church program. It is unfortunate when a scout troop has the sponsorship of the church

and feels no relationship except in name. By providing Christian leadership, adequate funds for support, frequent fellowship of the scouts in the work of the church, and occasional recognition of them in public worship—together with a genuine manifestation of interest in their activities—the church can develop church-minded groups. Recognition should be given to the personnel of the group, its progress, and its achievement. The education committee should maintain a close relationship to these groups.

The vacation church school should be one of the major educational projects of the church. It, too, gives an opportunity for additional Christian education. Plans should be made for the school months in advance—faculty secured, materials provided, projects outlined, and announcements made. Work should be done for the school throughout the year. It should be a real educational project, with high standards, splendid teachers, and work well done. When emphasis is being placed upon leisure-time activities by city welfare departments and social agencies, the church must be alert to the opportunity. Schools should be planned for as long a period as possible, and the vacation time should be utilized to the utmost for the building of Christian character.

Weekday religious education continues to increase in popularity. In some places the children are dismissed for an hour a week to go to near-by churches, where trained teachers guide an hour of religious instruction; in others the schools permit teachers to use schoolrooms for this instruction. While on a purely voluntary basis, many children will enroll in these classes who are not related to any church. This field ought to be explored and its potential harvest reaped to the fullest possible extent. Educational committees in local churches ought to be alert to this opportunity.

Age-Level Educational Opportunities

The education committee should study the age-level needs of the congregation and guide in meeting these needs. If the con-

gregation has age-level superintendents, they should be on the education committee. These leaders—the superintendent of the children's division, the superintendent of the youth division, the superintendent of the adult division, and the superintendent of leadership education—may be liaison officers to carry back the plans of the general committee and relate them to their respective divisions. These age-level divisions should be church wide. They will study the work of each age level across the whole life of the congregation and seek to guide the various organizations in their programs or perhaps supplement the work of these organizations in such a way as to build a more complete program for the church.

Children's Division

A committee known as the "children's work committee" should be made up of all leaders working with children in the local church. In a small church it may be composed of the teachers that work with the children in the various classes, but in a larger church it will also include the leaders of children's groups outside the church school. This committee will take the general plans made and study their implications for the children of the church. The minister, or minister of education, the church school superintendent, and a few interested parents may assist the committee. The group will seek to correlate the plans of other departments of the church as they relate to the children—evangelism, missions, stewardship, and worship. These departments will be mindful of the function of this committee as they plan. In short, this children's work committee will integrate for the children all the plans that have to do with a well-rounded program of Christian education and make it as effective as possible for the children of the church.

The children's work committee will seek to further parent and teacher cooperation, enlist the interest of parents in materials used by the church with children, and search out parents who are possibilities for teachers or sponsors. It may also organize groups of parents to study the Christian home or

parental problems, develop a children's library in the church, develop a library for the parents of the children of a given age, and plan service opportunities for the children of the church.

The children's work committee also may make suggestions to the chairman of the various departments regarding ways in which the several departments may plan their programs to the best interests of the children and suggest suitable materials for use with children.

Youth Division

The youth division of the church should be headed by a youth council, or it may be called a youth board. Youth sponsors may be members of the council, or ex officio members. The youth council may be elected by all the youth of the church and thus represent them all. It may be composed of the representatives of all the organizations of young people—church school classes, Christian Endeavor, boy scouts, girl scouts, circles, triangles, and others. However it is composed, it should be the correlating, building, and administering body for the youth of the church. If the youth council is made up of representatives of organizations, and thus serves as a correlating committee for youth work, each representative will carry back the total youth program and relate it to his own organization. If the youth council is elected to represent the youth of the church as a combined body of young people, committees may be appointed to carry responsibilities for various phases of the youth program—worship, study and discussion, service and social action, recreation and social life, evangelism, stewardship, missions, and interdenominational activities. The Christian Youth Fellowship functions on this pattern.

The youth council should study the program of the church as it is planned by church departments and relate its various phases to the youth of the church. It would be well for the church committees to invite young people to sit in their meetings occasionally that they may see the larger work of the church. The church committees may suggest phases of the program for which they would like youth to be responsible, and the youth

council may suggest to the church committees some things they would like to do or see done. The spirit of cooperation will stimulate the work of the church and enlist the youth in real churchmanship. The young people will accept responsibilities if given them and will make their part of the church effective and aggressive.

Besides the program for young people, as represented in the church school, Sunday evening groups, and other such groups, there are still other opportunities in the youth division. In some churches, the youth committee serves as a youth board, planning and accepting responsibility for certain projects. This board may plan and carry out a program for Youth Week or "Youth Month," when the members participate in the church services by helping to plan them, reading the Scripture, leading in prayer, acting as deacons and ushers, providing special music or a choir. They may also present a drama for a Sunday evening service, sponsor a youth dinner, be responsible for a mid-week service or dinner for the whole church, and participate in other activities in the church. The youth committee (or board) may sponsor a "go-to-college" service in September for young people going to college, plan a college dinner for them during the Christmas holidays, sponsor a baccalaureate service at morning worship for the members of the church who are graduating from high school or college, and give a dinner for them during graduation week. It may sponsor attendance of some of its number at conference, a convention or an institute. Or it may sponsor "stay-at-home" camps for those unable to attend conferences. The youth board may sponsor youth choirs, drama clubs, hobby clubs, and recreation evenings at the church.

The youth council, in cooperation with the church committees, has the opportunity to build a "youth church" that builds character, Christian leadership, and the Kingdom of God.

Adult Division

An adult committee should be composed of leaders—presidents or representatives—of all adult groups in the church. The

members of the adult committee will seek to cooperate with the church committees in relating plans to adult life, in correlating the plans for effective work, and in carrying forward the total program of the church in these groups. They will seek to build a sense of fellowship and solidarity among all adult groups, guiding them into a unified program in the life of the church.

The women's council will provide the organized expression for all the women of the church. In the council the women will have study groups and service opportunities and will relate themselves to the world tasks of the kingdom. They will also have an educational program, involving religious living, missions, stewardship, family life, citizenship, and other phases of Christian living. Church school classes will provide for study, service, and fellowship.

The men's club, or laymen's league, will provide expression for all the men of the church. This should be organized for monthly or bimonthly meetings to face challenging problems—social, citizenship, government, and religious. It should be an avenue through which Christian men may study and meet the problems of the world and of the church in a realistic manner.

The adult committee may seek to provide opportunities for combined adult education by sponsoring a missionary forum or other public discussion of vital issues. It may sponsor a series of "international nights," when representatives of other nations bring the thinking of their people on world affairs. The adult committee may sponsor a series of studies based on interest finders, such as those suggested in the Learning for Life Series. It may sponsor a series of "world tours," by means of motion pictures, and come to a better understanding of people of other lands. The adult committee may sponsor a series of studies on the "problems of democracy," having Christian leaders speak on city, state or national problems in the light of the Christian ethic. By its cooperative fellowship, the adult committee may help, not only to make the program of the other church committees more effective in the adult life of the church, but may

also guide in a program of education and inspiration that will vitally relate Christianity to the problems of the world in which these adults live.

Leadership Education

A leadership education committee may well be composed of representatives of the various groups in the church. The committee members may have as their responsibility a study of the leadership of the church in all its areas so that they may suggest possibilities for improvement. Each representative would face the problem of leadership in the whole church and would carry back the inspiration and challenge of the larger view to his own organization.

The leadership committee would seek to inspire leadership education in each group and would be ready to cooperate to make any initiated program more effective. It could help to provide materials for study to individuals, groups, or organizations. The committee could sponsor leadership institutes, for which outstanding people would be secured for one to three days to guide the church in facing its leadership responsibilities. The committeemen could sponsor schools for training either in the local church or in cooperation with other churches. They could sponsor the attendance of members of the church—key people or potential leaders—at conventions, conferences, schools, and institutes.

No church rises higher than its leadership. The greatest task before any church is the enlistment and development of leaders. The Kingdom of God waits on men and women who will prepare themselves to do needed work and on others to prepare to do their task better. Much emphasis must be given to leadership education if the church is to meet the needs of the world in a period of reconstruction.

The School Library

A library is very important to the educational program of the church. The education committee should build a good

library and keep it up to date. This can be done without great expense if a few books are purchased each year. The library should be one of the most useful of all the facilities of the school. A pleasant room, with Bible maps, reference books, and helps to Bible study, readily accessible to all church school leaders, will prove a joyful and useful place. A good librarian can greatly assist leaders by suggesting and making available useful material. Guidance in developing a library is available from many sources, and materials that should be included are too numerous to be mentioned here.

Education Committee Organization

The education department, then, has a significant, varied, and comprehensive task. It will require consecrated leaders, serious study, and earnest effort in order to realize the opportunities in this basic department in the life of the church.

The education committee should be well organized to meet its responsibilities. Its chairman should be appointed by the church board, and the vice-chairman may be thus appointed. There should also be a secretary and a treasurer. The membership of the committee and its organization will depend upon the size of the church. In smaller churches one person on the committee may be given the responsibility of a function or a combination of functions, as outlined in this chapter. In larger churches, where personnel is available, subcommittees may be formed to carry a function or combination of functions. After an analysis of the functions and needs confronting an education department in any church has been made, the local church committee will then decide how best to carry these functions for the progress of its own church. The pastor will be an ex officio member of the committee, as will also the minister of education. Careful records should be kept of discussions, plans, projects, and achievements. Evaluation should be made for future planning. The various phases of the work should be gathered together for one report to the church board; it should be written and should be as brief as possible to do justice to the work. The committee

should appoint a librarian, who will care for the books it uses, be on the lookout for other materials, and promote reading among members of the education committee. This function should be separate from that of the school librarian.

No emphasis can overstate the importance of the work of the education committee. It should see that the educational program of the church is thoroughly Christian in all its phases, permeated with the spirit and message and passion of Christ for his followers. The committee should see that the educational work of the church is education in the highest sense of the term—education that will stand alongside any other and be unashamed. It must use for the building of the Kingdom of God the techniques, the research, the methods, and the understanding that make public education effective. The education committee must dedicate all of these to the highest purpose to which the mind of man can be set—the training of the souls of men. Jesus said, "Go: . . . teaching them."

CHAPTER X

FINANCE AND STEWARDSHIP DEPARTMENT

THE progress of the church waits upon people who understand and accept the responsibilities of Christian discipleship and who enter into partnership with God to attain the purposes of his kingdom. The church has never fully marshaled its financial resources for the enterprises of the church, and therefore the possibilities of influence and progress have been only partially realized. The membership of the church has never been fully committed to the values of the kingdom and has never adequately supported them. The effectiveness of the church, therefore, and the program of the Kingdom of God, depend in large measure upon the functioning of the departmental committee which we are to consider in this chapter.

The Christian has a responsibility to the Kingdom of God, with its eternal values, which are basic to all other values. While all are aware of the demands of the superstructure of civilization, only the sensitive conscience and unswerving devotion of the Christian maintain the ideals and spirit that form the foundation. To arouse the Christian to that responsibility and guide him in giving the church greater strength and power than he has been accustomed to do is the task that confronts the finance and stewardship committee. If the church is to meet its responsibility, it must be by the enlistment of every Christian in the sacrificial support of kingdom interests. Christian stewardship will be the acid test of the reality of our conviction that the church of Jesus Christ is of supreme value to the world. The world waits upon the church to make Christianity more than a "profession."

The investment of life, energy, and service must be forthcoming to give sinew and power to the work of the church if it is to serve the needs of a world desperately longing for Christian leadership. Those who are charged with the stewardship program in the local church must be men and women of vision to see these responsibilities and they must be capable of guiding the church to see them and to meet them. This is a basic function of the church.

The Task of the Committee

The committee, therefore, will have a definite responsibility involving the whole life of the church. This responsibility will include a study of the philosophy of stewardship, in order that it may intelligently guide the church in this area; a study of the membership of the church to determine the extent of participation of each one—and the ability to participate—in the support of kingdom enterprises; the inauguration of a church-wide program of education to develop in Christian men and women a keen awareness of their relation to God, to the church, and to the world; and the planning of the church program to enlist the membership in individual support of the interests of the kingdom. This long-time, thoroughgoing, and church-wide task will require a year-round, well-planned, constructive program.

Stewardship is far more than finances. Stewardship has to do with the attitudes, the outlook, the insights, and the viewpoint of people. It has to do with relationships—to God, to other people, to money, to property, and to the church. Stewardship is a philosophy of life, a way of looking at life, and a way of living. People are stewards of life, property, talents, time, influence, and opportunities. Whether they will or not, they are stewards. They have things in their hands, and they do something with these things. A Christian is a steward of God's property, his church, his interests. Finances, therefore, have to do with one expression of our stewardship. If we are partners with God, we invest in the enterprises in which we are mutually interested.

If we are sons of God, we work for the family benefit. If we value and love the things of God, life and property and means are the ways through which we express our sense of values and show our devotion.

A Survey of the Task

In preparing for a stewardship program in the local church, it is well to know the general attitude and response of people to the values and responsibilities of the kingdom. Thus the following data, on a national scale, will provide at least a starting point for the more intensive study of the local situation.

During the years 1932-36, our national income increased 61 per cent, or a total of $48,718,000,000. Having more money, expenditures for jewelry increased 25 per cent, for theaters 41 per cent, for automobiles 203 per cent, and for radios 302 per cent. These are the things that people wanted to buy, and they had the money to buy them. During the same period, our giving to churches actually decreased 30 per cent, or a total of $126,000,000. In spite of the increase in income, the American people actually gave less to the church.

In the report of per capita giving of Protestant churches as made by the United Stewardship Council—which is generally accepted as the measure of church giving—the Disciples of Christ are reported as having given $9.88 per capita in 1943. Some local churches may find their giving higher than that and congratulate themselves on their generosity. But if we measure ourselves by the Congregationalists, who gave $18.57 per capita; or the Presbyterians, U. S. A., who gave $24.69; or the Nazarenes, who gave $41.83, we cannot complacently feel that we are adequately facing our responsibilities to the Kingdom of God, when we give one-half or one-fourth as much as others who faced the same responsibilities. When we face the further fact that a tithe of our income for that year would have brought our support of the great interests of the kingdom up to $90 per capita, we recognize that we fell far short of the biblical prin-

ciple—the measure that God gives for our devotion and the standard for our achievement.

Now to what extent do these facts apply to the local situation? What percentage of the members of the local church contributes to its support? Who are those who do contribute, and what can be done about those who do not? How much of the Lord's money are we ourselves holding back? These are some of the questions that must be answered by those who are to lead the church in a program of stewardship.

A Christian Philosophy of Stewardship

The committee should determine to acquire a clear philosophy of stewardship, one that is distinctly Christian. The planning, the educational processes, and the program of the committee will be guided by this Christian philosophy of stewardship. No group or committee can lead a church to clear thinking and practice whose members are not themselves guided by clear thinking and practice. Fundamentally, Christian stewardship possesses two clear and vital elements: (1) a recognition of God's ownership of all material resources and of man himself—including time, talents, effort, influence, and income; (2) a sense of responsibility for the use of all things over which man has control in partnership with God, who is the owner.

Many people have great difficulty in recognizing God as the owner of the things they possess, but that attitude and conception is at the very heart of Christian living. On the other hand, a large number of people who admit the *theory* of divine ownership, nevertheless reveal, in actual practice, very little sense of responsibility for the use of their lives and possessions in partnership with God.

"Christian stewardship," says Boyd M. McKeown, "is a spiritual attitude, a set of life principles for inward guidance, a philosophy of life." Mr. McKeown goes on to say that gratitude is the genius of stewardship—gratitude for divine blessings and a desire to express that gratitude in practical living, serving,

and giving. Another characteristic of stewardship is unselfishness, and God's principle of the tithe was designed to work at the very center of life as a means of overcoming the selfishness of man. A Christian steward works first for God and the ideals of the Kingdom of God. Still another characteristic is honor. God, the owner, delivers all material resources into our hands and puts us on our honor to be fair and honest with him. It is a matter of spiritual integrity. Therefore, a test of Christian character is our exercise of the principle of stewardship. It reveals what we are—our gratitude, our unselfishness, our concern for the things of God, our spiritual integrity, the depth of our Christian character.

Before we launch a stewardship program, therefore, we must analyze what people have been taught about their relationship to God, to their possessions, and to all the elements of life. We are to begin with attitudes, with conceptions, and with relationships. At the outset, then, we shall raise such questions as these: What is the real attitude of our people toward God? How do they think of their possessions, their talents, their time? On what basis do they support the Kingdom of God—on the basis of real partnership or on the basis of small change? Do they definitely and proportionately place God in their personal and family budget? Not until the committee has raised—and answered—these and similar questions is it ready to make a plan that will guide the membership into a rich experience with God. It is vastly more than putting money into the local church or the missionary enterprises of the church; it is a matter of life itself—commitment to God and his purpose.

A Twofold Task

Those who guide a stewardship program in the local church are confronted with a twofold task. To neglect either is to be shortsighted in planning; and neglect will cripple the church in its program. Careful thinking must be done and wise plans made that will continue to operate across the years in all areas of church life.

First is the task of education—a thoroughgoing, constructive, and comprehensive program of stewardship teaching. This program will seek to indoctrinate the membership—boys and girls, young people, men and women—with a Christian philosophy of stewardship. It will be a long-range program with definite ideals. It will guide the thinking of people in the basic conceptions of stewardship.

The finance and stewardship committee will plan with all auxiliaries of the church. The committee will seek to build, in cooperation with the education department, a program of stewardship education that will run through all departments of the church school. The members of the committee will counsel with other groups—the women's council, the young people's groups, the men's club or laymen's league—and help plan an effective program of education. They will secure material for distribution and see that it reaches all the people of the church. They will plan to develop a growing sense of partnership with God in the lives of the entire membership.

Second is the task of adequate support for the program of the church and all its interests. This program should seek to minister to the needs of all the world, thus constituting a call for real stewardship—sacrificial devotion, full consecration of life and means, and genuine partnership with God.

Financial support will be sought from two sources. The first of these will be that of a deeper consecration on the part of those who are already giving. The Christian who is truly growing spiritually will naturally desire to share more generously with his Divine Partner. The second source of financial support will be in the cultivation of those who are not sharing in the support of the church. It is dangerous to have non-givers in a congregation—dangerous to the church and to the people themselves. Paul's counsel to the early church was: "Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store" (1 Cor. 16:2). That was not only for the sake of the Kingdom of God, but for the sake of the people also.

Stewardship is real evangelism; and the enlistment of people in this privilege is the way to salvation.

The Task of Education

The pastor is vitally important in the program of stewardship education. There will be the closest cooperation in thought and purpose between him and the finance and stewardship committee. The pastor must lead in the financial as well as in other aspects of the church program. He will, therefore, give the utmost attention to the work in this department. One great service he can render is to discover, train, and inspire competent and consecrated laymen in the effective leadership of this significant task. The committee will, in turn, give moral support to the minister in his preaching on stewardship. Jesus spoke frequently about the relationship of men to their possessions, and the preacher will find precedent in these utterances and in this emphasis of Jesus. As a part of the preaching of the gospel, as well as a part of the stewardship program of the church, the preacher must give attention to Christian stewardship.

Preaching in the Educational Program

Preaching should stress the claims that are at the very foundation of a Christian philosophy of stewardship. The committee for finance and stewardship should enter heartily into plans for such preaching and do their utmost to make them effective for the largest number of people. This preaching should magnify the church. The claims of the church must be made vital, challenging, and commanding if they are to produce sacrificial devotion in the hearers. God does not conscript men or means, but unless they are given from the motive of love and conviction, our Christian enlistment is a pious fraud. Christian stewardship is a test of our Christian conviction and the expression of Christian citizenship. It is the unique task of the preacher to keep people sensitive to spiritual values and needs.

Many preachers follow the practice of preaching a stewardship sermon once a month during the year; others plan a series of consecutive sermons on stewardship each year, usually ex-

tending through a one-month period. There is a wealth of material for stewardship sermons: the commands of Jesus, the principle of the tithe and its implications, the Christian philosophy of life, vital partnership with God, and the qualities of Christian character. The parables of Jesus are rich in stewardship messages. The Christian philosophy of stewardship—that God is the owner and that man is responsible to him for all things over which he has control—runs all through the Bible; and when the preacher has a deep stewardship conviction, many Scriptures will stand up and challenge attention.

Sermons to children offer an opportunity for stewardship education. Many Bible stories may be used, as well as proverbs and stories of stewardship practices that are within the range of children's experience and understanding. The suggestions made for enlistment should be within the range of children's habits and activities, so that they may begin the practice of stewardship living.

The offertory furnishes an opportunity for instruction and inspiration in stewardship. Many pastors use it for definite instruction, briefly presenting incidents from mission fields to which offerings go or quoting Scriptures with a stewardship message. The offertory should be a high point in the hour of worship, being recognized as the consecration to God of an expression of life. It is a moment of both personal and corporate dedication and should never be conducted in a casual manner but with the solemnity which should accompany the presentation of life and substance before the Lord.

The minister and the committee could spend time and thought in outlining a year's program of sermons, offertory emphases, and worship services. This would lead to a sense of comradeship in a fundamental program of the church and give a continuity that would accomplish valuable results.

Teaching Opportunities in Stewardship

The finance and stewardship committee will have primary responsibility in stewardship teaching but may seek the coopera-

tion of the education committee in a constructive and long-time educational program that will build a more solid foundation for the future. Stewardship, to be effective, must be a matter of education—well-planned, farsighted, statesmanlike education. The objective, "Reach every person with Christian teaching," cannot be fully realized until people respond with their means, and that necessitates stewardship teaching.

The church board itself should be included in this program of education. If the church is ever to have a significant program of stewardship, it will be only after the church board has taken time to study the subject, has acquired some profound convictions about it, and has decided to lead definitely and effectively. The finance and stewardship committee should be more than a committee to raise money, think up schemes, and balance the budget. The budget is not the first consideration of this committee; the first consideration is the enlistment of life and a commitment of the membership of the church to partnership in the work of the kingdom. The church board is the crux of the whole matter. Many church boards are concerned only with enough money to pay bills and give little heed to the great needs of the Kingdom of God. Not only should there be a period of study and instruction for the board, but stewardship books should be kept in circulation among its membership. No congregation will rise higher than the level of knowledge, conscience, and practice of its board leadership.

The use of elective courses among adult classes offers another opportunity to guide groups in the church into new thinking and into a new experience in this basic philosophy of life. Certain elective courses in stewardship may be included each year. Many classes will welcome such courses and find a new interest in their study program. Some classes may plan to spend a month in this special study. Other classes may choose to have one stewardship lesson each quarter. Experiment in this field will determine the best method for the local church.

Women's groups offer an opportunity for stewardship education. Councils, aid societies, missionary and women's study

groups, may develop important units in this program. The decisive influence of women upon the family budget is beyond dispute, and they are an important part of the church membership; it is highly important, therefore, that they should be guided in the proper interpretation of stewardship. Many women's groups have a stewardship study as a part of their regular program; others give a definite period of the year to it; still others encourage stewardship reading.

It is important that the educational program include young people. They are forming their concepts of Christianity and should be led to see that stewardship is the life attitude of a Christian. Also, the practices formed in youth, when young men and women begin to have their own income, may become the pattern for all of life. Many educational opportunities will be found in the regular church school materials, elective courses, discussion groups, plays, dramas, and in the life experiences of the young people themselves.

The area of childhood is often overlooked in a program of stewardship. This is a serious mistake for the lessons of Christianity begin in childhood. Stewardship must be interpreted for, and made vital to, the children of the church. Habits and ideals may be formed that will influence all the rest of life and be of incalculable value to the Kingdom of God. Conferences should be held with leaders of children for the purpose of helping them to become understanding guides in this phase of Christian teaching. Another thing to consider is the joy which children experience in the practice of stewardship; of this they should not be deprived. Leaders and children should be led to realize that stewardship is a way of life. Every approach to giving should be worshipful and significant. "Taking an offering" may create shallow, careless, and irreverent attitudes; but "worship of our heavenly Father in gratitude and fellowship" may become a meaningful experience. Every children's department should be studied to see how and in what spirit the offering is taken.

These are some of the possibilities before the committee which takes a serious and statesmanlike view of its educational task and seeks to cooperate with the education committee in a vital and constructive work.

Special Educational Opportunities

The prayer meeting, or midweek group, will find an interesting and profitable study for a series of weeks in important Bible passages which deal with the grave danger of becoming absorbed with things. A study of great givers, or great spenders, or other lessons on stewardship will be attractive and rewarding. A period of quiet meditation and prayer in the study hour will help to bring personal adjustments and dedication.

Congregations which have "church night" programs in which arrangements are made for age-level groups or other study sessions may easily provide discussions on the claims of the church, personal responsibility, right attitudes toward all of life, the place of the church in civilization, and other themes designed to focus attention on partnership with God. Groups may also discuss profitably such themes as objectives in giving, household or personal economics, Christian budgeting, the family conference as a school in Christian living, and others.

Visual education offers an interesting avenue through which the great themes of stewardship may be presented. Stewardship slides, motion pictures dealing with the work of the church, and other visual aids will illustrate the importance of sharing in the kingdom. This avenue of education ought to be studied by the leaders of every church. It is a constantly widening field.

Several churches have done noteworthy work with essays. Junior high, senior high, and young people's groups can be enlisted in an essay contest with suitable recognition given for excellence. This will give inspiration for study and promotion in each department. Subsequently the essays may be published in the church paper, printed as leaflets, or used in a declamation contest in an evening service or before several groups in the church.

Various communions have provided posters to be used in connection with the budget canvass. They are graphic, thought-provoking, and challenging. Each church may provide its own, however, by encouraging its young people, or other members of the church, to make posters portraying a Scripture on stewardship. These may be used in mass display or in various departments of the church, rotating them from Sunday to Sunday.

Pageants and plays bring instruction and inspiration to many people who would not be interested in other ways. Much dramatic material is available which may be used in young people's groups, church-night programs, women's groups, or in the evening service. Less elaborate presentations may well be used before several groups in the church. This is an excellent method of stewardship education.

Another splendid method of stewardship education is the distribution of leaflets. Some churches plan to distribute, either in classes, by visitation, through the mail, or in some other definitely planned procedure, a leaflet every quarter to every family in the church. Some have followed the plan of a monthly distribution in the church school and at the public services. Others plan a weekly distribution during stewardship month or during the month before the every-member canvass. A systematic program of this sort over a period of time will bear rewarding fruit. An abundant wealth of such leaflets is available.

Periods of Special Emphasis

Periods of special emphasis often afford valuable educational opportunities. Thus the entire church may be organized for an educational project over a definite period, each such period being planned well in advance and thoroughly understood by all who are to lead or participate in it.

The observance of stewardship month is one such project. The particular month selected will be determined by the project's relation to the total program for the year. It should be educational in nature and should seek to interpret the basic philosophy of Christian stewardship to the church member-

ship. This can be done by making the emphasis both intensive and comprehensive. These methods may be used: (1) preach stewardship sermons; (2) set up a school in stewardship for church nights or elective courses in church school groups; (3) use pageants, dramas, forums, short talks by laymen, oratorical contests, slides, posters, and other materials; (4) use stewardship worship programs in church school departments, reading contests, and other educational projects; (5) promote a systematic distribution of leaflets through the mail, church school classes, church services, or visitation; (6) climax the month with a consecration service in which an opportunity is given to voice new convictions and make definite commitments.

Emphasis upon stewardship in the family should be a part of the observance of Family Week. The family is the basic training unit in society. Emphasis upon stewardship in the family places this vital matter at the very heart of Christian living. Giving, or sharing, or partnership with God, should be a definite, studied part of the family program. The Christian philosophy of stewardship as the guiding principle in the family would help to solve many problems. Christianity must be in all decisions in the home—the financial decisions no less than the others—if it is to be effective in daily living. A definite time should be scheduled to stress this emphasis. It may be at Christmas, when attention is centered upon God's gift of love to the world, or around Mother's Day, when the emphasis is upon the family.

The presentation of the claims of proportionate giving should be a part of all stewardship teaching, but a definite period may well be set aside for instruction in the implications of tithing. The principle of the tithe is a sound concept in Christian teaching and practice. It is a concrete expression of a vital partnership with God. A definite period of constructive and planned teaching in which the membership may face this principle and its meaning should be a part of the educational program of every church. Many churches observe such a period between Easter and Pentecost.

The climax of each educational program should be enlistment. Elective courses in the church school and the teaching of stewardship in youth groups or special study classes should lead to enlistment. Such effort should not be postponed till the time of the annual canvass; rather each period of study should climax in an opportunity to express deeper convictions or new insights. As people are converted, opportunity should be given for confession. The process of education should frequently result in conversions to the stewardship way of living, and the signing of pledge cards for the support of the church or covenant cards for proportionate giving should form the confession. Christian growth should be expected, and opportunities for commitment should be a part of an educational program.

Budgets and Their Support

The second great task of the finance and stewardship committee is that of raising the budgets to carry on the work of the church and to meet the needs of the Kingdom of God. This involves vision and faith. It is not enough to raise money to meet minimum bills; raising the budgets has to do with far more than money—it reflects the spirit of the members, their vision, their concern, their enlistment in the life of the church, their partnership in great spiritual objectives, and their commitment to spiritual values. Raising the budgets has to do also with the transformation of people—broadening their horizon, deepening their convictions, and vitalizing their companionship with God. Through budgets people preach, teach, convert, comfort, and mold life. Through budgets people heal the sick, educate the unlearned, lift the downtrodden, and bring Christ to darkened lands. Money is not the first objective in a budget but is a means to an objective. Budgets, therefore, are living, dynamic, transforming spiritual instruments, the means by which men and God join hands in great spiritual enterprises. The immediacy of the task of "making ends meet" sometimes clouds the vision of the real "ends" for which the church lives and serves. A proper philosophy of church budgets and money

raising will determine the spiritual growth and vision of the church. The committee, therefore, should give prayerful thought and planning to the inculcation of a truly Christian philosophy of church finance.

Every church faces the task of financing its program. And in securing funds to provide adequate resources for the work of the church in its ever enlarging service to the membership, to the community, and to the world, the church faces the task of enlisting its membership. This enlistment is not only for the sake of the support, but also for the welfare of the membership. The greater the percentage of members that support the church, the greater will be the solidarity and stability of the church and the spiritual interest and growth of its membership.

Making the Budgets

The budgets should express the needs of the congregation, the opportunities to be met in the community, and a vision of world-wide service. The budgets will present things to be done, service to be rendered, needs to be served, tasks to be undertaken. They should present a program that will grip the imagination and inspire sacrificial support on the part of the congregation. The items of the budget should relate to people—Christian teaching for people, homes of people to be inspired, visits to people to be made, service to people to be rendered. The budgets should provide for growth in the church and should look ahead to larger service in the future. They should represent needs and tasks, but should also reflect faith and vision. If a program worthy of the church has been built, one designed to minister to the needs of the church, both in its present state and in its future development, then the budgets become the expression of that program.

After the program has been built, the budgets are drawn up to provide the undergirding necessary for its realization. There will be careful evaluation of all the issues at stake in the local church and in the world-wide task. The budgets will express the plans to strengthen the local program where needed, an

effort to serve the spiritual interests of the local community, and a vital interest in world Christianity.

A church budget should be democratically made. It ought to express the study and planning of the various departments of the church, and each department should have a cooperative share in building it. The pastor should be consulted on all the phases of building the budget. The budget will express the spiritual conceptions of the congregation and the leadership of the groups responsible for guiding the functions of the local church. Its creation should be a spiritual adventure.

The making of the current-expense budget should be guided by the finance and stewardship committee. It should be made up well in advance of the time for the canvass so that the congregation may become thoroughly acquainted with the objectives and the program to attain them. Conferences will be held with the heads of the various departments of the church and with the head of any other group whose program participates in the budget before the committee proceeds to its task of drafting the budget. When it is completed, it will be transmitted to the church board for approval. Following this, it may be submitted to the congregation. Congregational approval will give a sense of "family" fellowship in the budget and will serve to increase congregational support. The world relationships committee should make up the budget for world causes and submit it to the church board for approval. The congregation should also have an opportunity to consider and approve this budget. The several budgets, in their various scopes, will express the faith and vision of God's people and the sense of their partnership with him.

Types of Budgets

There are three types of budgets that may be used: the single budget, the dual budget, and the unified budget.

The single budget usually includes all local expense and missionary giving in the one budget. Each pledge supports the total budget. There is one church treasurer, and the funds are divided between local expense and missionary causes on an

agreed percentage basis. Single envelopes are used. Every contributor gives to the entire budget. A continuous program of education should supplement the use of the single budget so that the membership may be kept constantly aware of the great tasks and causes that are supported by the contributions; otherwise, the giving may become the mere support of a budget.

In the dual budget, items for local expense are included in one section and those for missionary causes in another. Actually there are two separate budgets. Two pledges are made, one for each budget. The members of the church and the treasurer—or perhaps two treasurers—keep two separate accounts. Duplex envelopes are used. Each budget stands on its own merit. A continuous program of education should be provided to keep the contributors "two-minded" that they may face their responsibilities in both areas.

In the unified budget, all local expenses and missionary funds are included in one budget; this budget is a composite of the budget of the church school, that of the women's council, and those of all other groups. There is one budget for all the funds of the church, one treasurer, and one bank account. All organizations of the church that require financial support are given allocated amounts in the budget and are paid their share of the income at stated times. Missionary funds may be determined on a percentage basis or by definite allocations. Either single or duplex envelopes may be used. This plan correlates all the organizations of the church and unifies financial appeals, but each organization must carry on its educational and promotional work or it will lose initiative. The missionary emphasis should be kept strong in the work of the organizations so that this challenge may be made vital in the thinking of the membership of the church.

Every-Member Canvass

The every-member canvass, by the testimony of many years' experience in all kinds of churches, has proved to be the most effective way of financing the budgets of the local church and

of enlisting the membership of the church. When the canvass is carefully planned and carried out, it offers an opportunity to interpret the program of the church, inspire the interest, and secure the commitment of every member. An every-member canvass is an every-member visitation for the purpose of presenting the total program of the church and securing the intelligent, interested participation of each member. It will strengthen the loyalty of the members and deepen the spiritual life of the whole church. It will be an annual mobilization of the whole church for the whole task. The church ought to have such a thoroughgoing, church-wide, and personal mobilization each year, not merely for the sake of finances, but for the enlistment of the membership in the great tasks of the kingdom. It will be a spiritual revival in the congregation.

Types of Canvass

The complete visitation type involves the visiting, not of families, but of every member of the congregation. The visitor will present the program of the church and its claims to every person—men, women, young people, and children—that each may participate in the great tasks of the Kingdom of God. Each visitor should have a list of ten or twelve persons whom he should personally visit. This will involve many workers, but if it is rightly done it will mean a great spiritual uplift to the church.

The volunteer type of canvass offers an opportunity for members to volunteer their pledges and bring them personally to the church on a given day, either a weekday or a Sunday. This may be organized so that groups or auxiliaries of the church are assigned definite periods during the day. Captains may be appointed in each group to secure attendance, and a committee may be on hand to welcome and check each group. This promotes group loyalty and breaks the total congregation into units. The day should end with a great fellowship and inspirational dinner. A follow-up visitation may be made to complete the canvass.

The worship type of canvass is conducted as a part of the Sunday morning worship service. Care should be exercised in the selection of the Sunday to be devoted to this purpose, and every effort should be made to secure the attendance of every member. The high point of this special worship program is a period for the signing of pledges in a spirit of dedication inspired by music, Scripture, and prayer. The presentation of pledges may be by means of a formal processional in which all who have made pledges participate or by designating certain individuals to present the pledges for groups or auxiliaries. In some cases the pledges may be simply placed on the offering plates. If this is done it should be before or after the regular offering and everything possible should be done to add special significance to the presentation. This experience will be a spiritual uplift to the congregation. A follow-up canvass should be made to complete the task.

Many churches are now giving youth a definite part in the every-member canvass. Youth canvassers may be designated to see the young people as a part of the total program, whatever the type of canvass used. They will be given lists of young people and will receive the same training as the other callers. Other churches are using the "youth budget plan," in which the young people sit in with the budget committee, help to determine the amount that should go into the budget for youth work—church school, social life, and other regular phases of the church program—and agree upon the share which the young people will undertake to raise by their regular weekly contributions. When this is done, the young people organize their own canvass, appoint committees, supervise their publicity, and arrange the canvass. If the volunteer type is used, the young people will secure the attendance of the young people at their appointed hour and have committees to receive their pledges; if the worship type is used, they may secure attendance of their groups at the worship service and participate in whatever method is used for the presentation of the pledges. Youth will furnish leadership and may be thus enlisted in the program of

the church. This is one important way to make a youth program effective.

The united canvass is gaining favor in many communities. It is a combined effort on the part of all the churches of a community in a simultaneous canvass of their respective memberships. It is now organized on a nation-wide scale. There are some very significant advantages in this plan. Among them are publicity through radio and press, leadership and inspiration given by stronger churches to weaker ones, and the encouragement which small congregations receive from fellowship with those that are larger. The churches agree far ahead on the time of the canvass and organize thoroughly to carry it through. The fall or spring season is recommended for the united canvass.

One or the other of the foregoing types of canvass can be adapted to any church. Careful planning, thorough preparation, and complete follow-up will insure success. The committee must have vision and the desire to reach the whole church for the whole task.

Organizing the Canvass

The pastor is vitally important in this program. His guidance will help to make the canvass a great spiritual adventure in the life of the church. He will give vision, develop stewardship ideals, and enlist the congregation. He will inspire the leaders, challenge the membership, and stand side by side with the director and other key people in carrying the canvass through to success.

The director of the canvass should be a strong member of the finance and stewardship committee, a man of leadership and organizational abilities. His appointment may be for the year; in any case, he should be appointed far enough in advance of the annual canvass to enable him to plan intelligently and thoroughly for its success. His duties will be to secure the personnel for the canvass committee and the personnel for the canvass, to see that the budgets are prepared early, to provide

for the training of the canvassers, to secure promotional material for the canvass, and to make all plans necessary for the successful projection of the canvass itself.

The every-member canvass committee, of which the director will be the head, should be representative of all the groups of the church. An effective personnel will be composed of representatives of the following groups: elders, deacons, deaconesses, church school, women's council, youth groups, and other auxiliaries of the church, and some members at large. This committee should be appointed months ahead of the canvass. Its members may be organized into subcommittees to secure supplies, prepare lists, prepare publicity, enlist canvassers and organize a speakers' bureau.

Preparing the Prospect Lists

The finance and stewardship committee should have a permanent list of all members of the church, pertinent information about them, and an accurate listing of their support of the church for a period of years. A constant function of the committee will be a study of the giving of each member and the possibilities of development, the nongivers and possibilities of their enlistment, and the spiritual health of the congregation as reflected by this permanent list. Comparisons should be made with records of earlier years to note the progress of the program of education and enlistment. This list is the index to the effectiveness of the work of the department.

The canvass committee should build its work list from this permanent stewardship roll. It will make sure that the needed information is placed on the canvass card and that it is correct. The canvass list should include all members of each family and it may well include friends of the church and members of the various auxiliaries who are not members of the church. (Extreme care should be used, however, with nonmembers.) This is to be an "every-member" canvass, and every person should have the privilege of sharing in the kingdom tasks.

Prospects should be carefully studied and classified. The canvass is an educational project, and thorough knowledge of persons is preliminary to the process of education. Good givers will be one type, but they may not be proportionate givers and may need a larger vision of the kingdom. This is a school in growing appreciation of the values of the church. The good givers should be given a chance to grow. Fair givers and poor givers should have careful attention. They are not fully enlisted, and something needs to be done to arouse their interest further and secure their fuller commitment. A greater vision of the church and a deeper view of life needs to be presented. Information about the needs of the kingdom, the value of the church in society, and the service of the church to families and individuals need to be stressed. Canvassers are educators and evangelists. The nongivers are the special concern of the canvass committee. They need to be won to Christ and his program. It may be well to spend little time on the budget, but much time on the great values of the church and the opportunity to share in these vital and permanent values. Here the canvassers will evangelize and redeem souls for the kingdom.

The canvassers' cards should be carefully prepared with all the information needed to make the calling effective. Great care should be taken with the cards, for sometimes confidential information is included. Canvassers should be cautioned about this when cards are given to them. The important thing is, always, that the canvass is not completed until every person has been seen and a report made on each card. These lists are *people,* people with problems and responsibilities and with potential resources—personal, spiritual, and financial—for the Kingdom of God.

Training the Canvassers

A sufficient number of people should be enlisted to make the average number of calls about ten for each. These people should

be selected with care. They should be people of spiritual vision, with a vital interest in the church and a genuine concern for world Christianity; obviously they should be regular and systematic givers. This selection should be made well ahead of the canvass and should be made by personal interview. A percentage of younger people should be used so that they will be guided into effective service in later years. It is better to have fewer good canvassers than many poorer ones. Teams should be so arranged that the greatest strength is gained. These people are to represent the church and present its program.

The canvassers should be well trained. It is not too much to extend this training over a period of four weeks, one night a week. The program of training should be carefully arranged by the pastor and director and should include discussions of the following: the budget and its implications for service, the values of the church in civilization and in the community, the opportunities of the local church, how to enter a home, the attitude of the canvassers, the approach to individual contributors, how to keep the cause uppermost, how to make financial sharing appealing, how to meet criticism, excuses, and unspiritual opposition, what objections are likely to be given and how to meet them. These and other vital points will be raised in the training program. Demonstrations may be made. That the spiritual goals are greater than the financial goals and that the visit is to enlist people in service and activity in the Kingdom of God should be constantly stressed.

A few days before the canvass, the final setup meeting should be held. The cards will be given out so that they may be studied. Definite procedures will be settled upon and details completed. Final instructions should be given the canvassers along these lines: be thoroughly acquainted with your church program; keep your task on the spiritual plane; pray before you start into a home; since you are representing Christ and his claims, be genuinely Christian; be enthusiastic for your church and its program; help every person to see the worth of the

church and its spiritual ministry in the world; secure individual pledges and help to train each individual; make this a great spiritual crusade; enlistment is a part of spiritual growth; finish the task now. After an inspirational message, the meeting may adjourn. It will be the eve of a high day for the church.

Preparing the People

When the pastor and committee and the church board have carefully studied a program, have become convinced of its validity for their church, and are inspired by its possibilities, they need to impart that conviction and inspiration to the congregation. This must be done thoroughly, graphically, and with such inspiration and challenge that the hearts of the people will be reached and moved to action.

The local church program should be graphically portrayed: the attainments of last year; the work of departments; the number of people who attended the services; the number of meetings held in the church; the number of children, young people, and adults who attended church school; the number of pastoral calls, funerals, and hospital calls made by the minister; the various types of service rendered; the number of times the choirs sang and rehearsed; and a host of other personal and practical items will help people visualize the budget. It should be shown definitely how the income was spent last year and what results were attained. The program for the new year should be presented in a detailed and graphic manner, showing what results are expected. Many churches print or mimeograph a booklet outlining the program and pointing out its purposes. People want their church to serve, and when they see how it is serving or can serve, they will generously respond.

The world causes need to be depicted to the membership. The part the local church is planning to share, and the results to be attained, should be portrayed. The needs of the fields, and the ways in which a single church can help, should be vividly presented. The causes should be outlined in terms of

people to be helped, hospitals to be aided, children to be taught, and work to be done. Lines of service running on a large map from the local church to the fields, and showing the type of work done on each, will help the people to feel a personal relationship. People must know the facts and the needs. The budget should be made to live in human opportunities.

The budget should be presented in terms of stewardship. The blessings of the church, the benefits of Christianity, the spiritual undergirding of society, and the redeeming power of Christ have all been handed down to us. They are a trust. We are fellow workers in the Master's kingdom. We have a responsibility. The budgets are tangible expressions of our stewardship. The claims of proportionate giving, with the tithe as a minimum, should be presented to every member of the church. People enter into partnership with the Eternal God in the church budget.

Ways of Preparing the Congregation

There are many ways through which the congregation may be prepared for an intelligent, consecrated, partnership response to the budgets. Some of them are the following:

1. Sermons portraying the value of the church in society and the claims of the church on the individuals, the place of the budget in helping to realize the church's possibilities, the challenge to individual stewardship.

2. A program for the educational forces of the church—church school, church night, and other groups. The observance of special days in the church school will help to present the world-wide program of the church.

3. A speakers' bureau providing special speakers to present different phases of the budget and the various world causes in all meetings of the church groups—weekday and Sunday—for a certain period before the canvass. It will be helpful to use missionary speakers at every opportunity before groups of the church.

4. Special literature—leaflets challenging individuals to personal stewardship, literature showing various brotherhood causes, budget material showing the items of the budget, and other promotional material. These may be distributed for a month previous to the canvass.

5. Canvass letters setting forth the purposes of the budget, presenting full information about the work and plans of the church, and challenging individual participation. These may be used for four weeks prior to the canvass, and literature may be enclosed with them.

6. Slides showing missionary work, benevolent work, and other causes; slides showing local work and the activities of the local church.

7. Publicity in the church calendar and the church paper; the use of cuts, posters, and exhibits.

This will be the greatest event of the year, and the attention of the whole church should be enlisted. The church is preparing to underwrite the work of a whole year in a period of a month. What the church does in a few weeks will determine what it does for a whole year. It should be a great church-wide movement to enlist the whole church.

Making the Canvass

A variety of methods may be used in the every-member canvass, such as the every-member visitation, a volunteer pledging day, the worship dedication of pledges, or a combination of methods. A thorough and effective presentation of the opportunity of every member of the church to share is more important than the method. The determination to do a thorough job is the key to a successful canvass.

A Sunday should be set for the beginning, and it should be made a significant day. The canvassers should all be present, the largest possible attendance of the congregation secured, a great stewardship service arranged, and a spirit of expectancy created through the entire membership. The canvassers may

be called to the front for a consecration service and charged with the responsibility of the task. If the volunteer pledge day or the worship dedication type of service has been used, they will be charged to complete the task. A dinner may be served at the church for the canvassers. At the dinner, last-minute instructions will be given, all materials will be furnished, and an inspirational service held. The canvassers should start by two o'clock and report back to the church as they close the day's work. The director of the canvass should stay at the church to receive reports, care for problems that may arise, and evaluate the work of each team and instruct them for the completion of the task. A report should be given at the evening service for the inspiration of the church. All who were not seen on the first Sunday should be seen during the week. The canvassing should be completed before or on the next Sunday. A meeting may be held on Wednesday evening to receive reports and make plans for the final work. The complete report by each team should be given on the second Sunday afternoon. A full report should be made to the congregation, together with an interpretation of the spiritual significance of the task and the opportunity afforded for next year's program. The amount pledged and the number of pledges should be a part of the report. The announcement of victory and the report of the participation of the membership will inspire the whole church. This week will be a great spiritual "revival" for the entire church, and spiritual results should loom large in the reports and interpretations.

A Careful Follow-up

There should be a carefully planned follow-up of the canvass and a continuing program that should run throughout the year. This program will keep the inspiration glowing and give atmosphere to the congregation for the next year. It should consist of the following: (1) A letter of appreciation to each giver; (2) envelopes, distributed as soon as possible; (3) a quarterly report on all pledges, whether paid up or in arrears,

together with an inspirational letter and literature; (4) a quarterly letter with literature to all not pledging, telling about the work of the church and the important things being done; (5) a restudy by the canvass committee of all the cards, notations being made for future reference; (6) the enlisting of new members in the support of the kingdom as they come into the church.

In case the budgets are not reached, careful study should be made of the possibility of a supplemental canvass, the need for revision of the budget, and the plans that may be made for more thorough stewardship education.

Organization of the Committee

In a large church the finance and stewardship committee may be organized with subcommittees, such as literature, lists, publicity, and such others as may function effectively through the years. Then a continuous study of phases of the task may be made and preparations made from one year to another. The committee should have a secretary to keep a complete file of materials, letters, leaflets, and plans, so that improvements may be made. A librarian may serve the committee by keeping books circulating among the members of the committee, supplying them with helpful pamphlets and other materials which will enable them to make a continuous study of the various phases of their task. Written reports should be made at church board meetings, and the board should be kept informed as to the financial status of the congregation. Quarterly reports of the budget should be made to the entire congregation. They are stockholders in a great enterprise, and their confidence will grow as they are kept informed. Information is the source of inspiration in the financial affairs of the church.

In smaller churches, various responsibilities may be carried by individual members of the committee. No church is too small to have a budget and to give careful study to the needs of the church and the outreach of the kingdom. No church is

too small to challenge its membership to great and growing interest in the wide enterprises of the Kingdom of God. The church that is interested only in keeping a meager program alive and meeting minimum bills is hardly in partnership with God. If there is no planned and studied program to challenge the membership to commitment and to sacrificial giving, the church cannot grow stalwart Christian character.

The finance and stewardship committee should analyze the budget from time to time to determine whether or not the expenditures are running as expected. A system of vouchers should be worked out so that those who are authorized to permit expenditures may properly endorse the order; in this way the invoice will always correspond to the order. There should be a clear understanding as to who may authorize the expenditure of money, and that one should be held accountable to the committee. When extraordinary expenses occur, the committee may recommend to the church board that certain adjustments be made in other items of the budget so that the emergency can be met. The committee is always subject to final approval of the church board in making recommendations, but when emergency matters are brought first to the church board, they should be referred to the finance and stewardship committee for study and recommendation. This committee will see that the treasurer and financial secretary are bonded for suitable amounts and will also recommend the annual audit of the books.

Some of the materials that will be helpful to the work of the committee are as follows: *Save Money,* by Versteeg; *Christian Materialism,* by McConnell; *Stewardship,* by Morro; *When Christ Controls,* by Versteeg. Study materials are: *Will a Man Rob God?* by Cushman; *Why Give? Christian in Actions; Jesus' Teaching about Stewardship; Progressive Stewardship; Unified Promotion.* A wealth of plays, dramas, leaflets, and pamphlets are also available. The committee should make a study of materials to recommend to classes or groups for distribution and for placing in the library of the church.

The finance and stewardship committee will have a most important function in the life of the church. People will grow in joy in Christian service under its guidance; members will become real stewards of God's goods and enter into partnership with God; children will grow into vital Christian life with a reality in their Christian relationships; young people will be challenged to great Christian adventure in their Christian living; men and women will find deepening meaning in possessions and a more significant life; the church will grow in spiritual awareness and in a larger, nobler service. This committee is working at the very center of Christian living.

CHAPTER XI

EVANGELISM DEPARTMENT

JESUS taught his disciples two things in preparing them for their great work as spiritual leaders. One was how to pray; the other, how to win others. Praying had to do with their own inner enrichment and communion with God; winning others had to do with their responsibility to their fellow men in bringing them to Christ. One is spiritual development; the other is evangelism. These two things, with their implications, comprise the total work of the church.

The function of the committee which we are to consider in this chapter is evangelism—bringing people to Christ. The permanent charge on a believing, worshiping church is evangelism. Someone has said that religion is always enthusiastic and propagandist; it is that for which a man feels himself constrained to live and even to die. Propagandism is inherent in every true conviction; as Paul says, "I would to God, that . . . not thou only, but also all that hear me this day, might become such as I am" (Acts 26:29). A believer is always a crusader. Our faith is not safe, nor is it real faith, unless we find it so precious that we cannot keep it to ourselves and unless we realize that religious individualism is a contradiction in terms.

Evangelism is the very compulsion of Christianity. To forget that is to forget the very spirit and purpose of Christ. It has been pointed out that a church must evangelize or perish. The unalterable law, written in the very fabric of the church just as truly as it is the law of the physical body, is, "Grow strong or die."

This permanent charge on the church, this crusading conviction and inner compulsion of Christianity, puts the evangelistic function at the very heart of the church. The evangelism com-

mittee, therefore, will be working with the task that determines the growth of the church and with that spirit which gives it vitality. Evangelism is one of the basic tasks of the church and is worthy the very best effort and study of the group that is responsible for it.

Facing the Task of Evangelism

An analysis of the status of our brotherhood would help the evangelism committee to realize the task that confronts its members. This is one way of feeling the pulse of evangelistic zeal in our brotherhood life. It is not a very encouraging picture, but one that challenges us to new endeavor. It faces us with a need which this committee will help to answer—a need for a more vital spirit in our church life.

A comparison of our Year Book for 1935 with that of 1941 shows a net gain of 36,346 in our brotherhood in the United States and Canada. In 1935 there were 53,455 baptisms, and in 1941 there were 55,236, or 1,381 more than six years before. The average for the years 1939-43 was 53,657 baptisms. That means that it takes twenty-seven people a whole year to gain one person for Christ. The evangelistic spirit of our brotherhood could well be more "enthusiastic and propagandist."

An analysis of one of our strongest states is even more alarming. A comparison of our Year Book for 1930 with that of 1940 reveals that there were 5,113 members less in 1940 than a decade before; and that while there were 5,169 baptisms in 1930, there were only 2,911 in 1940; which is to say that in the latter year it took 43 members one whole year to win one person to Christ. In classifying the churches in this state which made full reports, discarding all marked "Estimate," it is found that in twelve churches with more than 1,000 members each, two had fifty baptisms or more, eight had twenty-five or more, one had ten or more, and one had less than ten; in the thirty-one churches with membership from 500 to 1,000, three had fifty baptisms or more, twelve had twenty-five or more, twelve had ten or more, three less than ten, and one had none. In

the fifty-four churches with membership from 250 to 500, eight had twenty-five or more baptisms, twenty-nine had ten or more, fourteen had less than ten, and three had none. Of the ninety-seven churches with a membership of more than 250—the strong churches of the state—none had as many as 100 baptisms, only five more than fifty, and sixty-four had less than twenty-five, and twenty-six less than ten. One church of 526 members reported no baptisms. This seems to indicate one thing—we are not practicing an enthusiastic and zealous evangelism. We need to face such an analysis as this in our own church and see what our record has been over the past ten years. This will be one procedure for the evangelism committee.

But people are interested in the church. We have consoled ourselves with a false assumption. We have said, "We cannot do anything about it, people are just not interested in the church." An analysis by President E. S. Briggs, of Phillips University, made a few years ago of the leisure-time activities of adults in the state of Missouri is encouraging to church leaders. He discovered that 73 per cent of the people in the urban centers do go to church regularly or occasionally; and that 74 per cent of the people in the rural centers do go to church regularly or occasionally. In contrast with their interest in church, he found that only 52 per cent ever attend motion pictures; only 26 per cent ever attend dances; and only 22 per cent ever attend lodges.

The Task of the Committee

The task of the evangelism committee will relate to the basic function of enlistment throughout the life of the church. It will study the evangelistic spirit of the congregation and seek to guide it to a greater concern for people and a passionate zeal for the unreached. It will survey the field and plan for the best outreach. It will mobilize the evangelistic forces of the congregation for a well-planned, comprehensive, year-round program of evangelism. It will make plans for evangelistic meetings and other public or mass appeals that seem best suited

to the local field. This committee will have primary responsibility for this function throughout the church; and, in cooperation with other department committees, it will guide in a complete, unified, and church-wide program. The spirit of the church and the growth of the church will depend upon the wise, planned, constructive guidance of this committee.

Personnel of the Committee

The members of the evangelism committee should be of the strongest people in the church and should be representative of the congregation. They must possess a strong evangelistic spirit and must be able to inspire others. They should be well balanced in their view of the total church program and be able to interpret this function in the light of that program. They should have organizational ability because there will be groups to lead and organize and programs to guide to successful completion. They will need to understand the educational aspects of this function and how to plan constructively in this field. They will need to study the development of human personality and the psychology of development and transformation. The members of the evangelism committee must give time and study to this momentous task in order that they may become centers of inspiration and knowledge. In their hands rests the responsibility of guiding lives into a saving relationship with Christ, of inspiring those who know Christ to give themselves to the joyful service of winning others, and of promoting the growth of the church as a power in the Kingdom of God. It is a task to which Jesus gave great attention, one in which he carefully schooled his disciples. To the evangelism committee Jesus would say, "I will make you to become fishers of men" (Mark 1:17).

Definition of Evangelism

The committee that undertakes to guide the church in this important task should study the meaning of evangelism and then set the program to fit the real meaning of the term. Once it meant an annual meeting; at other times emphasis has been

upon an annual or occasional visitation project; to some it may mean decision days, and to others an annual preaching mission. Evangelism includes all these things, but it is more than any one of them, or all of them put together. One of the first things a committee will need to do, therefore, will be to formulate a philosophy of evangelism, or a pattern of evangelism, that will guide its thinking and planning and that its members can interpret to the congregation.

Whatever other elements may enter into our thinking in formulating this basic philosophy—and there will be other elements—there will be at least these four, as suggested by the Madras Conference: first, the divine factor—the seeking God as revealed in Christ, whose yearning for the lost is expressed in a cross; second, the person, evangelist or any person, who, with loving purpose and winsome manner, conveys the gospel message and by word of mouth, by written letter, by printed page, or by planned interest, seeks to guide another to personal relationship with Christ; third, the person to be evangelized, who is without personal relationship to Christ as Savior and Lord; and fourth, cooperators, who by the validity of their Christian living and by other means, as devotion to the church and prayer, strengthen the appeal of the evangelist and challenge the individual desire and purpose of the person to be evangelized.

The heart of evangelism is the presentation of the gospel—the Christian message that God loves men, that he seeks to have fellowship with them, that he has sent his Son into the world to redeem them and restore them to fellowship with a heavenly Father, and that his Spirit dwelling in men's hearts enables them to become sons of God. The gospel is good news to the individual. It meets his deepest personal needs. It gives him a new center around which life revolves and enables him to make the adjustments to this new center. It introduces him to a new Personality, who imparts his own vision, attitudes, purposes, and strength to the individual. It remakes life according to a new pattern.

Evangelism is more than revivalism or projects or special days. It is a continuing spirit, issuing in various efforts to win men to Christ, running naturally and impellingly through all the congregation, both in public and in private, directed to individuals and to groups. It is a spirit that earnestly desires to bring men to Christ and employs various ways and efforts to achieve that aim—but the spirit is the central thing. This passion for souls constitutes the heart of evangelism.

The evangelism committee should ponder the issues and elements involved until it is able to formulate its own definition of the evangelistic task; then it will have a solid foundation upon which to build its program. It will have both scope and direction for this fundamental task and will be able to guide the congregation in a growing, constructive, spiritually healthful program. A committee guides that knows the way, and the congregation profits by the leadership of a group which has mapped the way. This the evangelism committee ought to do intelligently and with statesmanship.

The Evangelistic Congregation

The congregation is the base upon which an evangelistic program is built. The characteristics of the congregation determine the fruitfulness of the program and the success of the efforts of a committee. If the congregation is worldly, complacent, and self-centered, the best efforts and plans will be hindered and perhaps made futile. If the congregation is spiritually concerned, motivated by deep convictions regarding the validity of the gospel and its relevancy for human need and inspired by the divine urgency for man's redemption, it will provide an effective base for plans and programs.

The Madras Conference points out that whenever a church loses its evangelistic fervor it loses its soul. Therefore, the validity of the church's evangelistic enterprise derives directly from the congregation or local church. When its worship and the life of its members glow with the presence and power of God, the company becomes creative and redemptive. The con-

gregation's concern and zeal will then find expressions in definite and various ways to bring Christ to the man outside the brotherhood, and these expressions will enlist the gifts and influence of every member. The congregation's passionate concern for the unchurched is the foundation of an evangelistic program.

A warm, winsome, friendly spirit is essential to an evangelistic congregation—a warmth that can be felt in corporate worship, a winsomeness that reaches out to enfold all people, and a friendliness that makes everyone feel at home. There is a hunger in the hearts of people to be wanted, to feel that they belong, and to have a part in something worth while. The congregation that meets that universal hunger wins people. If worship is formal and the fellowship is cold and the church circle seems closed, it will be difficult to win and hold people, no matter how well planned a program may be.

Another essential is belief in the message of Christ and its redemptive power. People want to live a better life. They want to overcome the influences that drag them down and conquer the sins that defeat them and resolve the tensions that make life a treadmill. They want a power that can restore hope and a message that inspires faith. They look for that in the church and in the people of the church. The congregation that demonstrates faith and power, that knows its message to be valid because it has been through the crucible of experience, and that speaks of the power of Christ with the reality of a living knowledge will win people to its fellowship. People are haunted by fears, perplexed by problems, and defeated by circumstances; they hunger for a faith that will bring strength and victory. When they find a people who seem to meet life with confidence and bear its brunts and hard circumstances with triumphant poise, they are ready to listen to their message and believe its power. The evangelism committee, then, will seek to cooperate with the worship and devotional life committee in guiding the congregation to a sense of the reality of God and his

resources for all of life. In so doing the two committees will strengthen the base for a program of evangelism.

Another essential quality in an evangelistic congregation is an alertness for people without Christ. It will be that kindly, confident alertness that says with an eager concern, "You are missing something vital." So many church people go in and out among the unchurched without ever revealing that they think that one without Christ is lost or has missed anything. The congregation that wins will be one whose people are alert for the unchurched and are deeply concerned that they find a Savior who meets human need, forgives sin, gives strength for life's ills, and adds significance to life. The committee, therefore, will seek to develop a constant vigilance for the unchurched and a kindly but impelling concern for their response to the gospel message.

This will lead to an aggressiveness that is something like a crusade. This is inherent in the Christian faith. Great believers have always been great doers. This aggressiveness will be the kind that gives expression to a concern like that of Paul, "My heart's desire and my supplication to God is for them, that they may be saved" (Rom. 10:1). It is the kind of spirit that invites people to church, manifests a friendly and serious concern for their spiritual welfare, and seeks to interpret to them the values and satisfactions of the Christian life. It is this spirit that will make every Christian an evangelist, preaching with a life that is genuine and radiating his faith in the validity of the Christian gospel. The committee will inspire that kind of gracious, winsome, constraining aggressiveness in the life of the congregation.

All of these qualities, undergirded with a deep love for God and for men, will lay the foundation for success in evangelism. The love that binds them all together and gives them glowing warmth will be like that in the heart of God when he sent Christ into the world. It is a love that makes service a joy and sends people out with souls that radiate the yearning of a heavenly Father for his children who are lost.

The Minister and Evangelism

The minister is the key person in a program of evangelism. In the soul of the preacher there must be the flame of courage, conviction, and certainty. In his heart there must be a passion for the lost, the sad, the hurt, and the sinful. He must have the conviction in his own soul that the gospel message will meet the needs of the human heart. He must know in his own heart the love of God for those who are marred by sin and caught in the meshes of worldliness. He must reveal his faith in the power of God to save and redeem. He must preach for decisions and expect men to hear the call of God. The evangelistic fervor of the pulpit will inspire an evangelistic fervor in the hearts of the people.

The preacher must do more than preach. He must show his concern by being an evangelist. We speak of the pulpit power of Spurgeon, but few people realize that for forty years in London he averaged one convert a day. It was the power of a personal ministry. This gives vitality and concreteness to the preacher's concern for souls. The example of the minister in day-by-day evangelism stirs the hearts of his people and sets them to the task. He must be energetic and untiring in his personal search for the lost and in his efforts to win them to Christ. If this is a "first thing" with the preacher, it will come to be a "first thing" in the life of the congregation. Paul's admonition, "Do the work of an evangelist" (2 Tim. 4:5), is still a valid charge to the preacher.

More than that, the minister will give his inspiration and guidance to the development of a program of evangelism in the local church. The evangelism committee will work in close fellowship with the minister; together they will plan, organize, and carry out the program. Here again he will show his concern for the unchurched and inspire the church to this first task of the Christian. With his training in personal work and in the understanding of people and his experience with groups in the church, he can give wise counsel and guidance. The success of

the program will rest largely upon the interest and fellowship of the minister in the work of this department.

Evangelism and Lay People

Historically we have placed too much stress upon the minister and the evangelist and not enough on the lay people in the program of evangelism. It has been expected that the minister would build the church through his evangelistic preaching or personal work, and the congregation has coldly calculated his success. Perhaps an evangelist was called in to build the ranks of the "elect," and a complacent congregation has stood with folded hands to see how much "power" he could generate. No one would minimize the place of the minister or the evangelist, but the compulsion of evangelism rests upon every Christian. The acceptance of this responsibility by the lay people of the church is one of the crying needs of our day. It will be one of the major concerns of the evangelism committee.

Every Christian needs to be an evangelist for his own sake. He must seek to win others to give continuing vitality to his own faith. It has been said that no one is truly redeemed until he becomes a redeemer. The reality of one's own faith may be questioned unless it expresses itself in the desire to share with another. Lay people need to channel God's saving grace to others lest their own souls become clogged and they become stagnant pools in themselves. To share God's love and goodness is to multiply it in one's own life.

Furthermore, every Christian needs to be an evangelist for the sake of the church. The unchurched no longer come within the doors of the church and hear its message and make their decision for Christ. The church must carry its message and appeal to where people are—in the home, in the market, or elsewhere in the daily walks of life. This will be done only as every Christian realizes his personal responsibility as an evangelist. During the week every church reaches out through all the life of a community or city, and its appeal can be expressed in a hundred or a thousand contacts. The church whose member-

ship carries this influence into daily living may become a powerful instrument for Christ.

Above all, every Christian needs to be an evangelist to bring others to Christ. People need Christ, and they are lost without Christ. This passion in the heart of the Christian to reach others is the dynamic of evangelism. The Christian yearns for those who are without Christ, even as does his Master and Lord. To win others to Christ is not only a responsibility, but a source of boundless joy.

The evangelism committee must find ways of enlisting, training, and organizing the membership into a spiritual force to draw the lost to Christ. This will be one of their continuing tasks, and the results will depend upon their ability to do it effectively.

A Continuing Program of Evangelism

Most of the evangelistic efforts of the past have depended on a series of projects. The projects may all have merit in themselves, but there needs to be a comprehensive and unified program with definite long-time objectives. It will be the task of the committee to plan a church-wide program and relate all efforts to the total task. This is one of the continuing functions of the church and should have the emphasis of a major concern of the church.

The committee should make a survey of its task. It needs to face seriously the fact that half the population is unchurched, that one-half the people living within the influence of the church are not related to any church. It needs to find who those people are and accept them as a responsibility.

Then the evangelism committee should set goals for the church. Its members will plan ahead for years and seriously seek to realize the goals. These goals will not be mere figures; rather they will be people who are to be reached that their lives may be transformed and enriched by the gospel; they will be homes to be enlisted; they will be souls to be saved.

The resources of the congregation will be evaluated—the organizations that may be used, the educational processes that need to be set in motion, and the individuals who may be enlisted and trained. Every congregation has untapped resources of power that may be used for the Kingdom of God. The progressive development of these resources will multiply the effectiveness of the evangelistic program.

Then a well-planned procedure should be outlined. It may be that emphasis should be placed upon one method the first year and another the next. Looking ahead for a number of years, a program can be developed that will provide continuous results. The organization and training developed in one method for one year will carry on while other resources and personnel are utilized another year. It will be an expanding and growing program as it unfolds across the years. As the program is developed in this way, each method should become a part of the normal, soul-winning function of the church.

An Evangelistic Prospect Roll

The basis of all evangelistic endeavor is the prospect roll. This will be the responsibility list of the congregation. It will constantly challenge the congregation to be about the business of the church. It should be carefully kept and should always be available for constant reference. It is more than names; it consists of people who may be waiting for the gospel invitation, who have needs and hungers that only Christ can meet, and who have in their hearts hidden yearnings for a heavenly Father. These people may at any time respond to the messenger of Christ. The evangelistic prospect roll is as vital as the church membership roll.

It should be kept in a permanent file in a loose-leaf notebook, on pages of ordinary typewriter size. It should contain the original information, and then as contacts are made and reactions come, all additional information should be placed on this sheet. This will become a growing "case record" of each individual. The names of those who make the calls, the dates

when made, and results obtained will be transferred to this sheet. A card on which pertinent information has been transferred should be used as the "visitor's card."

Experiences from various churches have shown that the following are the most fruitful sources for a prospect roll:

1. A "family survey" of all families on the church roll to discover individuals in these families who are not members of the church.

2. A church school roll survey to discover pupils who are not members of the church and families touched by the school but not by the church.

3. A "silent roll call" in the worship services. Cards may be placed in the pews and those who are not members of the church asked to sign them and place them in baskets. This may be done at those times when the membership is registering attendance so that all present will be signing cards. World Wide Communion Sunday, Pentecost Sunday, or such other times as a registration of the membership may be desired, can be used for this purpose. The card should provide space for the name, address, telephone, and church affiliation.

4. A "visitors' book" in the foyer of the church. The reception committee can easily note strangers and ask them to sign. An invitation may be printed on the calendar calling attention to it. A host or hostess should preside at the "book."

5. A community survey should be made every three or four years. This may best be done interdenominationally. The "preference" cards will offer good prospects, but the "no preference" cards should be distributed to all churches in order that each church may do what it can to win them.

6. Church members should be encouraged to supply information concerning friends and neighbors who are not attending church. This should be a fruitful source of information.

7. Arrangements can often be made with the public school authorities for a religious survey of the public school pupils. This should be done interdenominationally.

8. In many communities there is a retail credit association which secures the information on all new families moving into the community. Names and addresses can generally be obtained from the association.

9. Moving companies will frequently supply names and addresses of new families moving into the community. Also, utility companies sometimes make available names and addresses of families receiving utility service for the first time.

10. In most cities a "welcome wagon" service calls upon all new families in the city. For a small fee they will secure the church affiliation of all families contacted and turn the information over to the proper church.

11. The minister's pastoral service will furnish valuable new contacts, such as marriages performed, funerals conducted, and other personal service rendered. This is a most fruitful source of new contacts for the church.

12. Members of the church may be encouraged to watch for new people moving into their area. If the "parish plan" is used, the captain-couple can encourage each family to make note of any information gained from neighbors or new people moving into the community. Inquiries by the pastor about the people living near the homes of those he visits will prove rewarding. A call next door may find a prospect.

Prospects should not easily be "given up." Cultivation for years may be necessary before the harvest. Information should be kept and results tabulated so that each visit may be cumulative. It is better for those who have made progress to continue the contacts. The minister should keep close to the prospect roll. He will make suggestions to visitors that will be helpful and give inspiration that will be fruitful.

Organizing for Evangelism

In organizing groups and committees for evangelistic work, it should be kept in mind that every church member should be challenged to assume the responsibility of enlisting others. This can be kept before the congregation by the evangelistic mes-

sage, by pulpit announcement, by the church paper and bulletin, and by special congregational projects. The whole church should be looked upon as an evangelistic force, and provision should be made to motivate and channel that force to the accomplishment of this important task.

However, special groups must be enlisted and trained. Workers should be hand picked, then assigned to specific tasks and given training for them. Definite projects should be planned and personnel enlisted to give them vitality and power. This will be one of the constant tasks of the evangelism committee.

Some of the features that may become a part of the continuous evangelistic program of the church are as follows:

1. "The Seventy." This group is based on the "sending of the seventy," and has that scriptural inspiration. A number of people may be personally enlisted and arranged by twos. It will be husband and wife in most cases, but two women or two young people may be paired. They become a permanent organization and may number from twenty to 150 depending on the size of the church. They may meet bimonthly for training, sharing of experiences, and assignments. Only two cards are given to a couple for the two months. They are to visit, become acquainted, and make friends. The assignments are small so that time can be taken to cultivate the people visited. The couples make notes on the cards and return them at the end of the period, but they do not release the responsibility. They continue to build the friendship and cultivate the people for the church. At the end of the year each couple has twelve people in this circle of friends, but each prospect has six couples of the church in a spiritual "cell" cultivating him. Many of them will have come into the church, but the most unlikely are still on the hearts of the people of the church. This is especially designed for "slow" prospects, but it will bring results.

2. Visitation projects. From time to time during the year, or at least once, the church may plan a visitation evangelism program. It may be for the fall, for Easter, for Pentecost, or for a preaching mission. Workers should be enlisted and

trained for the task. They should meet for four or more weeks, one night a week, to discuss the Christian message, the approach to make, and methods of conducting an interview. When the program actually starts, they are prepared to render a real service. The plan may call for four weeks' visitation, one night a week, or for one week with three or four nights of the week. The group should meet at the church for a dinner meeting, at which they receive their assignments and materials, departing after a brief devotional service. They should have some tracts to leave with prospects. In many cases it may be well to return to the church at the close of the evening for a report meeting. This gives encouragement and inspiration. Many people who find a joy in this project will continue in personal work throughout the year. The organization may be kept intact for the next such program that is planned, new people being enlisted from time to time.

3. Church school evangelism. Two significant things can be done to vitalize the church school in the program of evangelism. The evangelism committee, in cooperation with the education committee, may have meetings with the teachers and workers in the primary, junior, junior high, and senior high departments to discuss the educational processes that underlie Christian personality and methods that may be used in guiding children into a vital relationship with Christ as Savior. The use of lessons in the regular series may be discussed, and other material may be provided. Methods that may be used to help make decisions meaningful will be planned. While there will probably be few decisions among the children in the primary department, these teachers ought to be familiar with the total evangelistic plan. The time of these meetings will be determined by the local program. Sound educational methods are imperative. Committees may be appointed in each class or department, from the high school up, to assume evangelistic responsibility for the unchurched in their several groups. They will meet them in class, in social activities, and will become well acquainted with them. This class committee will be

constantly working at the task of bringing the unchurched into church membership. This will be a continuous program.

4. Mail evangelism. The use of the mails is an often overlooked but fruitful evangelistic method. Well-selected literature ought to be on hand for enclosures. A personal letter written to the prospect a few days after a satisfactory interview will often be a deciding factor. "The Seventy" may be encouraged to write when a prospect is near decision. Letters may be written to a large group calling attention to the influence their decision will have at Easter time or other stated times of the year. Invitations written to "remote prospects," calling attention to the Christmas or Easter program, will help to instill in them a feeling for the church. Months of such well-selected cultivation will make them into "warm" prospects.

5. Nursery evangelism. An alert nursery department will provide a means of cultivation that brings results. Attention given to the new baby, and a spirit of helpfulness manifested toward the home at this time, will interest parents. Pamphlets or books on the spiritual development of the child may be lent by the church; these will be eagerly welcomed and will give concrete evidence of the fellowship of the church in this new responsibility in the home. Parents may be won by such interest in the baby.

6. Men's club. Many churches have a breakfast or noonday men's club that meets weekly to receive prospects, make reports, and share new contacts. This will be an informal group that spends an hour discussing this important business and equipping its members to do a real "salesmanlike" job for the kingdom.

7. Membership classes. It is a growing custom to conduct "church membership classes" for children before Easter or at some other time in the year. Children of the junior department may be given instruction in the meaning and significance of church membership in special weekday classes organized for that purpose. Classes for young people and adults are also increasing in favor and are becoming more widely used. Some

churches conduct classes after Easter when a large number have come into the church. Such classes ought to be more widely used. When a person takes the important step of becoming a church member, the church should make every effort to see that it is made as significant as possible.

8. Decision days. Much can be done to make "decision days" significant and impressive. Christmas can be stressed as a time when decision is a birthday gift to Christ or an expression of appreciation for his coming. Preparation will make it a meaningful experience. Easter portrays Christ's redemptive sacrifice, and this gives meaning to decisions at this time. Children may be prepared to come on the Sunday before Easter; then an impressive baptismal service may be held on Tuesday evening, magnifying that ordinance during Easter week. Pentecost may be magnified as the birthday of the church, and people will respond to "Decision Day" or "Membership Day," as an expression of appreciation for the church.

9. Visitors' day. Some churches have made a success of observing "Visitors' Day" occasionally, some of them quarterly, urging the members to bring guests. This places evangelism before the whole church and gives the membership an opportunity to bring prospects. The service is evangelistic in spirit and message.

10. Literature. Religious groups are using literature very effectively. A supply of good evangelistic tracts on foyer tables will be used both by inquiring people and by members to give out to friends. They may be used also by "the Seventy" and by visitation teams. They will be effective in the mailing program. More use should be made of this method of evangelism.

11. Members elsewhere. The evangelism committee will find much work to be done with people whose membership is elsewhere. A great cooperative movement ought to be inaugurated in our brotherhood to discourage the practice of nonresident membership. We ought to teach people that their membership belongs where they live. Then churches ought to be willing to write to those who have moved away urging them to place

their membership in the church near their new home. The committee should write to churches asking their assistance in securing the affiliation of such members.

12. Public evangelism. Such public "evangelistic services" or "preaching missions" or intensive efforts to enlist people ought to be held as the church can make effective. At intervals people who are skilled and trained in this special service may be called; an exchange of pastors may be effective; or pastors may lead their own services with special help.

The evangelistic meeting marshals the resources of the church for a given time in the greatest business of the church. It inspires and revitalizes the membership. It enables the church to make its plea to the community and to seek definitely to win others to Christ. Mass evangelism can be used effectively, and it ought to be restudied as a program of the church. Some are conducting city-wide, simultaneous campaigns with good effect. Constructive and long-time plans ought to be made in this area.

Such a listing gives the appearance of unrelated projects, but the evangelism committee will have the responsibility of weaving whatever methods are used into a continuous, unified, church-wide program. Out of these and other methods may be chosen those plans that are most adaptable to the local church. Whatever the methods, the committee must lead in the knowledge that this is one of the inescapable functions of a church.

Organization of the Committee

The evangelism committee will have a chairman, a vice-chairman, and a secretary. In a large church it may be divided into subcommittees, such as prospects, "the Seventy," visitors, literature, and others. In a smaller church, individuals on the committee may have these responsibilities. This will be a busy committee, and the secretary should keep a record of all plans and programs. The committee should also have a librarian to assemble pamphlets, tracts, and books for the use of the com-

mittee and circulate them among its members. Brief written reports should be made to the monthly board meeting, covering the work of the committee.

In the small church, evangelism is generally confined to an annual effort or to the work done by the minister. No church is too small to have a committee working during the whole year at a continuous task. The methods suitable to the church ought to be carefully studied and consistently worked. There is no valid excuse for a church to shirk this important function.

Some of the books that ought to be in the hands of the librarian are these: *Evangelism for Today,* by Cartwright; *Reaching the Unchurched,* by Murray; *Evangelism and Change,* by Hughes; *Evangelism in a Changing World,* by Bailey; *Evangelism in the Home Church,* by Blackwood; *Where Are the People?* by Powell. Helpful tracts are *Guidance in Personal Evangelism,* by Wickizer, and *Visitation Evangelism,* by Black. To these should be added the series, Effective Discipleship, containing pamphlets on the meaning of church membership, the ordinances, the Disciples, and others that will be useful in the program.

Cooperation with Other Departments

The evangelism committee, with its primary responsibility in this function of the church, will seek to work with other departments to make the church program most effective. The education department will be interested in helping find prospects and will be constantly on the alert for new people, particularly those for whom it has a responsibility because of their relation to the church school. Plans may be made jointly for the educational features of evangelism, decision days, and other methods in which the church school can be helpful. The evangelism committee will work with the membership department in assimilating new members into the life of the church. Plans may be made together to share and shift responsibility so that new members may be effectively located in the life of the church. This committee will cooperate with the finance and stewardship

department to the end that new members may come into a vital and effective relationship with the church. Each committee functions to reach and conserve people for the Kingdom of God, and a spirit of mutual cooperation should prevail.

This task is a compulsion of the church. The Madras Conference suggests that the church must either make its impact upon the secular world today and win it for Christ, or the secular world will increasingly encroach upon the spiritual life of the church, blunting its witness and dimming its vision. There is, therefore, a note of urgency and insistence in this task. The church dare not stand still. It must glow with a radiance that will light the world, or the world will be in darkness. This is a task that Jesus lays upon the hearts of his followers.

CHAPTER XII

WORLD RELATIONSHIPS DEPARTMENT

THE divine imperative, "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations" (Matt. 28:19), places the missionary function at the very heart of the church. In vision, outlook, and program, there is no such thing as a local church. Every church is a part of a world. The world is its field; the world is in its heart and life; and the world must be in its expression of Christianity. This sense of world citizenship, feeling of world obligation, and assumption of a world task are inherent in the Christian profession.

Someone has said, and well, that the church that ceases to be missionary can no longer be evangelistic, the church that ceases to be evangelistic can no longer be evangelical, and the church that ceases to be evangelical may well doubt whether it is Christian. The power of the church at the home base is inseparably linked with the zeal of the church for the ends of the earth. The passion of the church for its work of education and evangelism depends upon its passion for the work around the world. The possession of the gospel of Christ in the hearts of men is an inner compulsion to share that gospel with all men.

A church, then, must have a sense of a world mission if it is to realize its destiny as a church. It must have the burden of the world on its heart if it is to share with its Lord. It must have the passion for "going" in its message and ministry if it is to claim the promise of His presence. It must realize the brotherhood of men in its life and witness if it would know the fatherhood of God. It must give salvation to the lost in the name of Christ if it would know the salvation that is in Christ.

A study of the response of our brotherhood is not convincing that our people have a sense of world mission or realize any

urgent world obligation. The report of the United Stewardship Council for 1943 reveals that the Disciples of Christ gave $1.79 per capita for all missionary and benevolent causes. That means the average expression of concern for the world program of Christ per individual member was one-half cent a day for 1943, a little more than a postage stamp a week. This is a tangible expression of our sense of world responsibility.

A comparison of the records in the United Stewardship Council report, in which the Disciples of Christ stand at the bottom of a list of nineteen communions, reveals that the United Presbyterians gave $8.33 per capita, or five times as much as the Disciples; the Presbyterians U. S. gave $6.93, nearly four times as much; and the Evangelical Church, $6.63, more than three times as much. It would be most disconcerting to assume that their devotion to the message of Christ and their passion to win the world for him was that much greater than ours, but it cannot be denied that their tangible expression of a sense of obligation embarrasses us.

Furthermore, in our Year Book for 1941, there were 5,467 churches that made missionary contributions of record, but 2,579 made no contribution of record. Approximately one-third of the churches, therefore, manifest no concern for the world mission of Christ or for the distress and woe of an unevangelized world. Whatever else may be said of this situation, it does indicate that the church needs to be aroused to its central task and that its people need to feel a vital companionship with the divine Redeemer. It does give us an insight into the great responsibility that rests upon the world relationships committee and the magnitude of the task that confronts it; for here is where this committee will begin in the average church, and from this point it will launch out in its program.

Personnel of the Committee

On the world relationships committee there should be men and women who have an earnest passion for the world-wide program of Christ, who believe in the brotherhood of men in

Christ, and who have the ability to lead and inspire others in this world outlook and devotion. They will realize that this spirit of world-mindedness is inherent in the Christian faith and that the sacrificial desire to share their faith is one of the most urgent compulsions in the divine imperative. They will be people who are willing to take the time necessary to keep themselves informed about kingdom interests and who are willing to be continuing students of the world needs. They will be representative of the congregation, being related as fully as possible to the various auxiliaries of the church. They will be leaders—leaders in thought, in education, in spirit, and in action.

The Task of the Committee

This will be a church-wide committee with responsibilities running throughout the total life of the church. While its members have primary responsibility for the missionary program of the church, they will seek also to cooperate with the education committee in guiding a constructive educational program and with the finance and stewardship committee in the financial undergirding of the tasks of the church. They will carefully study the congregation, evaluate its present attitude and mind, and plan a long-time program of advance. They will hold institutes, organize schools, promote convention attendance, and relate the congregation to the great ongoing Kingdom of God. They will study literature and make available to the congregation such materials as will be helpful. They will study the world needs and guide the congregation in meeting a budget that embodies a sincere expression of world concern. In short, it will be the task of the world relationships committee to guide the church into a vital and intelligent relationship to the world-wide movement of the Christian faith.

The Scope of the Committee Task

The department is designated "world relationships" because it will have a concern for more than "missions," in the restricted sense of that term. While it will have, as a definite

and continuing charge, the relating of the life of the membership to the missionary enterprise of the church, the scope of its task will also include such social problems as those of race, labor, industry, liquor, and crime. And in addition to its own efforts in these fields, it will also lead the congregation in an intelligent study of these great problems. It will have to do with problems of government and with the means by which men and women are developed into intelligent Christian citizens. It will have a concern for world peace and will lead the congregation in an understanding of the factors involved in the problems of war and peace. It will guide the congregation into such organizational relationships as may enable it to feel itself a part of the great movement of Christian force in world affairs. It will help the congregation to become a vital part of its town or city and relate it to its state and national program. It will guide the congregation into a fellowship with the colleges, benevolent homes, and other institutions that are seeking to mold a better society. In short, the world relationships committee will relate the church to its community, its brotherhood, its nation, and the world and will guide in a study of the problems involved, seeking to lead the church to an intelligent expression of its divine mission in the world.

Needs to Be Met

The church is confronted with desperate needs in our world today. It must meet them with sacrificial devotion and confident faith. Their urgency gives deep significance to the work of the world relationships committee. It should marshal the best thought and study to the task. Nothing less will be worthy of the church in the face of the helplessness of the world.

The chaos of the world presents a crying need. History probably never recorded a more chaotic condition than the present. It is a chaos that arises out of geographical confusion, overrun nations, and upset boundaries. The settled patterns of life have changed. It is a chaos that arises out of cultural confusion, interruption of education, compression of the normal

changes of decades into a few short years, encounter with the new and the strange on every hand. It is a chaos that comes from economic maladjustments, the burdens of debt, the grind of reconstruction, the intricately woven forces that are mixing the world together, all life being forced into patterns not of our making. The world is in a chaotic bog, and the church must give faith, courage, and vision to the building of a highway leading to a new world.

Civilization needs cohesion. It was said of the early centuries that Christianity held the world together. The world today is shivered in fragments. There are conflicts in philosophies of life. Peoples and nations are living by widely differing interpretations of the meaning and goals of life. Conflicting ideologies have made the world a battlefield. Racial tensions threaten civilization. The races of the world are coming to sharp points of conflict. This is one of the powder kegs of the modern world. There are sharpened national distinctions. National boundaries are harder to cross, and the walls of psychological differences are more noticeable. These and other tensions threaten to shatter modern civilization. Christianity can again provide that spiritual cohesion required to save the world from complete disintegration. It alone possesses the spirit that can mold mankind into a brotherhood and bridge the chasms and heal the hurts of the world.

Citizenship needs interpretation. We have emphasized the rights and privileges of citizenship and gloried in the fruits of democracy, but we have failed to stress the responsibilities and duties of citizenship and to hold up a vital interpretation of the soil of democracy. The highest conception of citizenship lies in the application of Christian principles. When we fail to see that citizenship consists in the enjoyment of privileges by all, we admit a class distinction and a caste system that undermines all guarantees. When we fail to keep in mind that democracy is rooted in Christian ideals and grows out of the soil of Christian belief in the inviolability of human personality, we undermine the foundation upon which the structure

rests. Christian ideals must be kept vital, and the Christian interpretation of life must be kept fresh, and the church must do that, or it will not be done. This is a pressing need of today.

Social problems need to be faced in the light of Christian teaching. Society has been dominated by secular ideals. People have made the means of life the ends for which to live, and the worthy ends of life are forgotten. In the selfish race and the mad scramble for things, there have risen tensions, conflicts, and maladjustments. Christian teaching must be applied to the race problem, if dangerous tendencies are to be curbed and peaceful solutions reached. Christian teaching must be applied to the labor problem, if the gains of Christian civilization are to be made available to all. Christian teaching must be applied to health, recreation, leisure time, education, and all the areas of human living, if the highest possibilities of human personality are to be gained by all. The church must face all these problems intelligently and must assume its responsibility for the formulation of social interpretations for the guidance of today's world.

Someone has said that the world has become a physical neighborhood, but a spiritual enemyhood. Communication, transportation, government, education, trade, and all other factors of modern life have helped to make the world a physical neighborhood; but it remains for the agency of the spiritual to make it a spiritual neighborhood. Until the church is able to form the spiritual attitudes of men, and motivate their behavior, it will remain a warring neighborhood. The church must face this responsibility and work for the "neighborizing" of the spirits of men.

Peace is one of the crying needs of this torn, agonizing world. It is the earnest hope and prayer of countless multitudes that ways may be found to secure permanent peace. Statesmen with only nations in their minds will never lay the foundation for peace. Diplomats with only races in their minds will never lay the foundations for peace. Only statesmen with a world in their minds can build that foundation. Christian universalism,

based on the concept of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, is essential to the building of a new world. The church ought to be aggressive now as never before to furnish the spiritual atmosphere and thinking for this glorious, but grave and fateful, opportunity.

Above all, there is the need for the evangelization of the world. Great areas of humanity are moving into a new era of opportunity and destiny. It is an hour for Christian conquest. The world will be industrialized, it will be commercialized, and it will be modernized. In no area of the world will there be backward people in the sense of their lacking the "gadgets" of civilization. But the world must be Christian. That is the burning challenge to the church. Preaching stations must be maintained, education must be fostered, hospitals must be founded, and new ideals of life must be taught to these people who are on the march.

Guiding Objectives in Work

Whatever the details of the program of the world relationships committee, there will be three definite objectives that will serve as guides in all its work. And the tangible results in these lines will indicate the committee's progress toward the realization of its aims.

1. *Inform.* Information is the source of inspiration, we have been told, and it is the foundation for right thinking and right action. Therefore, the world relationships committee will seek to inform the membership of the church. It will be alert to all needs, bringing together information concerning them from various sources and using this information to lay the basis for a broad understanding of the problems involved. It will seek to keep the congregation informed as to what is being done to make the world and society Christian, thus giving encouragement to its faith in the church. The committee will discover and devise new and more effective methods of presenting information so that it may grip the attention more firmly and stamp itself more indelibly upon the memory. The members

of the committee will provide information suitable to all ages in the church; it will be their responsibility to see that the children grow up with world minds, that youth shall view the world in the light of a Christian interpretation, and that adults shall apply their growing knowledge to present problems. A major objective of this committee will be to produce "an informed congregation."

2. *Re-create.* Paul spoke of "renewing your minds." It is not enough simply to give information; that information should be so inspiring and challenging that it will lead to new minds—that is, new attitudes, new ways of looking at things, new ways of reacting to things. It will be a part of the committee's task, then, to change attitudes, to enlarge vision, to stretch horizons, to expand hearts, to bring people to "have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus." This task of "re-creating" people will be a continuing responsibility.

3. *Enlist.* The number of people enlisted in a world crusade for Christ is pitifully small. The number enlisted in Christian citizenship in a local community or city is woefully small. Out of the informed and re-created people, however, should come a constant stream of enlistments. That is the test of "conversion." So the challenge to the mind and the appeal to the heart are for the purpose of enlisting people in a real fellowship with Christ in the making of a new world. Some will be found who are willing to render a certain type of service, others will be found who are willing to take the time for training for larger service; some will be found who are ready for the enlistment of their means in the support of the world cause, and others will be ready to offer themselves for full-time Christian service. That person has been rendered a real service who has been helped to give expression to his love for Christ by doing something or giving something for the sake of Christ's kingdom. The world relationships committee, therefore, will be aiding people to joyful, useful, and expanding service in the Lord's kingdom. Count a new enlistment as the evangelism department

counts a new convert. It is a new day in the kingdom for that person and for all the areas where that person may serve.

The Minister and the World Relationships Committee

In this, as in every other program of the church, a great responsibility rests upon the minister. His spirit, vision, guidance, and inspiration are the base upon which the success of the committee and the growth of the congregation generally rest. If he has a global mind, it will be reflected in the thinking that he shares with the congregation and in his influence in the several groups that he touches. If he has the world in his heart, his sympathetic understanding of the needs and problems of the world will create a sympathetic congregation. In his preaching, prayers, and other public leadership, he can create in the congregation the spirit of a world passion. In his interpretation of the current world problems and in his emphasis on the work which the church is trying to do, he can inspire participation on the part of his hearers. The minister has no greater responsibility than to face the church toward its world obligation. His spirit and message will largely determine the vigor of the missionary and benevolent program of the church.

The world relationships committee will have the primary responsibility in planning and channeling the missionary program of the church. It will cooperate with the education committee in connection with the inclusion of missionary and social education in the total educational program of the church. It should present an occasional program at the workers' conference so that the missionary responsibility of teachers and workers may be interpreted to this group. The world relationships committee will encourage missionary education in all auxiliary groups of the church and aid them in planning programs. It will give encouragement to the women's council and take a vital interest in their work. It may enlist the cooperation of all groups in the church for the planning of church-wide institutes or schools of missions. This is a church-wide task, and this committee

should study all avenues of missionary activity in the church, seek to correlate them, and expand their program wherever possible. The minister and committee should work in constant fellowship so that each may augment the effort of the other.

Plans of the Committee

The plans which channel the program of the world relationships committee will depend upon the initiative, resourcefulness, and vision of the members of the committee, but some of the ways in which they may function will be the following:

1. Plan a long-time program of education and activity. The committee members ought to have a vision for the years and plan their objectives accordingly. Educational processes are slow, and the committee ought to make provision for a persistent, cumulative program that will achieve the desired ends.

2. Plan an annual program in detail. The long-range program should be broken up into years, each year being thoroughly planned. Special observances, a school of missions, institutes, and other major plans should be made for the year, and then careful preparation should be made for each activity and emphasis.

3. The committee itself ought to seek to become "expert" in materials, methods, world causes, and world needs. This will be a constant concern of the members.

4. Plan permanent materials for education. The world relationships committee can accumulate materials for the church—a museum of missionary articles, pictures of missionaries, scrapbooks of fields, and filmslides of foreign lands. A missionary "corner" in the church will become a favorite place and have great influence.

5. The committee can be on the alert to secure temporary materials for the church and its groups, such as motion pictures, stereopticon slides, loan libraries, and other loan or rental materials.

6. The committee may be on the alert for unforeseen opportunities, such as sharing in emergency needs, working on proj-

ects for agencies, promoting attendance at lectures or motion pictures that have a missionary or social implication.

7. Encourage definite plans for reading. This may be done by maintaining a library in the church and securing up-to-date books for it, by circulating the missionary books in the city library, by encouraging the reading of missionary magazines, and by calling attention to articles in secular magazines that have missionary significance.

9. The world relationships committee will analyze the church's giving, encourage financial participation of the church and auxiliaries in home and foreign projects, and keep the church aware of the needs of the world.

10. The committee will provide for missionary education of the leadership of the church and enlist personnel for such leadership. It will encourage the attendance of the leadership at conventions and plan for such other opportunities as may help to relate the church to the broader areas of church activity.

11. Keep the program before the church. In making its plans the committee will secure the approval of the church board; the plans then become the program of the church, and the committee will have the responsibility of carrying this program through to achievement.

Avenues of Work

The regular church worship is an educational and inspirational avenue through which the congregation may be guided toward world-mindedness. Both sermons on the missionary challenge itself and illustrations used in other sermons afford an educational vehicle. Sermons dealing with the application of the gospel to world affairs, to social issues, to governmental problems, as well as those dealing with the interpretation of the Christian foundations of civilization, help to inculcate a broader outlook on the part of the hearers. Great missionary hymns and global thought in prayers are aids. Missionary checks that are ready to be mailed may be publicly dedicated with prayer. On special Sundays a lighted globe, or a world

map with lines running out from the local church to the points of missionary service, will lift people to a higher recognition of their world relationships. Keep the church world-minded.

The church school offers the world relationships committee a continuing opportunity for the realization of its educational aim. Worship services in various departments and occasional missionary programs will give information and inspiration. Special days should be observed for their educational value. A well-planned approach should be made to each such day, the preparation extending through the three preceding Sundays. The cause for a given day should be carefully studied in all its phases in order that it may be presented as effectively as possible. An offering, or the expression which follows the impression, should be a part of the educational program. Occasionally projects may be undertaken in classes or departments, but the understanding and study which make an intelligent response should never be neglected. A museum, maps, and pictures will help to make lasting impressions. Motion pictures will tell a vivid story and give an understanding that cannot otherwise be gained. Missionaries presented for a brief period in children's departments will make lasting educational impressions. Let someone take a picture of the missionary with the superintendent or a group of children and enlarge it to hang on the wall. Letters from missionaries and from the benevolent homes should be read to various departments when they have participated in a project that brings a note of response.

Sunday evening youth groups offer educational opportunities, the value of which will be readily recognized by the world relationships committee. The Sunday evening groups may study racial problems, guided by people of different races; or national problems, guided by people of various nations or by people who have traveled in them. They may study social problems, led by social workers or by people in the government service. Specialists in the fields of crime, delinquency, race, liquor, and the like are often available for such guidance. Forums providing an opportunity to present different phases of a question and dif-

ferent points of view will promote the broadening of thought. Motion pictures provide an opportunity to study conditions and visit places out of actual reach of the groups and thus lead to a better understanding of these situations. Youth groups are deeply interested in learning about the problems of their world; the methods here mentioned will meet an eager response.

Weekday groups will be a special concern of the world relationships committee. The women's council will be engaged in mission study, but its members ought not to neglect the great social, industrial, racial, national, and world problems. A motion picture presentation of some vital problem may be made an interesting feature of the weekday socials of the church school classes. The men's club will be greatly interested in similar programs. Or the club may schedule a series of talks by representatives of the police department, the juvenile court, the marital relations court, and perhaps some other bodies of this category. The club members will be better citizens because of their new understanding of problems presented by these speakers. The vacation church school is a training ground for children, and much can be done here with pictures, museum study, the study of national or racial groups, and the presentation of world travelers who can tell of children in other lands.

The midweek meetings of the church may be helpful in this area. One church scheduled a series of four "international nights," with music and a speaker from as many different nationalities. It was an adventure in understanding. Again they scheduled a "World Tour" series, extending over five nights, with motion pictures from five different countries. A series of Bible studies dealing with "Great Missionary Turning Points" gave a biblical background to the world mission of the church. A vivid study of five pioneer missionaries was a real adventure, and many read the books depicting the lives of these soldiers of the cross. These were dinner meetings and proved of interest to young and old.

The church school of missions, or world tour school as one church called it, is a most effective means of study and under-

standing. For six years the same plan was followed: a six-week program in January and February, with a brief worship period for all, a period for classes graded for all ages, handwork and pictures for children, graphic study material for youth and lectures for adults, closing with a stereopticon visit to a mission field (one year foreign and the next home), with an average of 700 different people reached by the school.

Missionary institutes may be held in any church. A missionary is scheduled for a definite time, and careful preparations are made. It may be for three or four days or longer. If it begins on Sunday, the day's schedule includes a message to a children's group, a brief word to the young people, and a combined session of the adult classes, the morning worship, a snack supper and a youth meeting in the evening, and the night service. The following day the missionary and educational leaders of the church may meet at night, then a men's dinner the following night, and a church-wide dinner as the closing feature on Wednesday night. An informal children's meeting may be held after school some evening. The institute will be a vital experience in the life of the church.

Special days offer a vital opportunity for education in world concerns. On Thanksgiving Sunday, the emphasis is on "Christian Education and Other Causes"; on Christmas Sunday, "Benevolence"; on Easter Sunday, "The Church, Its Ministry and Message"; and on Children's Day, "World Missions." All these provide an opportunity for constructive education and the cultivation of a sense of wide fellowship in the task. Other great deays bring other special emphases and help to quicken the sense of ecumenical fellowship. A list of these special days will be found in the Appendix, pages 203f. Helpful materials are available for use in the observance of most of these occasions. In connection with the observance of these special days, it would be well for the world relationships committee to project a long-range program, scheduling the observances for a period of years and distributing the various possible emphases throughout the period. Such a plan would help the church to

face the definite responsibilities confronting it and heighten the sense of ecumenical participation in the undergirding of these responsibilities.

A world Christian citizen period may be observed as a special period for facing world problems. It may be scheduled for two weeks or a month, and during this time a church-wide emphasis on world issues may be planned in which the school of missions, a missionary institute, special classes, reading and drama projects, and other activities could be correlated. This might be made an annual project with different emphases selected for the different years. Such a plan would help to bring the church to global-mindedness.

Methods in Education

A variety of methods used across the years will help the world relationships committee to keep a vital, interesting, and challenging program in progress and will enlist a greater number of people. Available materials will make such a program feasible, and it is within reach of any church.

Visual education is a method that is growing in influence and one that is easily applied in missionary education. One church collected an interesting museum by purchasing articles from mission lands. The museum was placed in a beautiful case and became the center of the "missionary corner" in the social room. When a missionary came to the church, a picture was taken of him with the pastor or other church leaders, or with some children, and it was enlarged and placed in the "missionary corner." In four years an interesting array of pictures was collected, and they had personal interest. Various artists' portrayal of Jesus may be used in worship centers; stereopticon slides, filmslides, and motion pictures are interesting for all ages; photographic enlargements never grow old—one church secured a dozen pictures of its living link and the hospital where he served, and they were in constant demand in the church; maps, posters, charts, will be permanently useful—a group of junior boys mounted a large map on beaverboard,

boxed it in, and wired it with electricity, placing a light behind every place where the church contributed support, and it was used repeatedly in various groups; a world map and a globe ought to be available in every church; a bulletin board can be kept interesting with a variety of pictures, messages, and maps. There is almost limitless use for visual aids.

Drama offers an interesting and effective method of presenting missionary and social messages. Plays may be thought of as sermons preached by a group instead of a single person, thus providing a wholesome means of expression for this larger number. Much material is available in this field and should be used often.

Reading should be encouraged. A church library ought to be kept up to date, with an alert librarian in charge. Thumbnail sketches of books given in church school classes, weekday groups, and other public meetings will create interest. One church published a reading list every year on the current mission studies, composed of all books in the local church library and many books in the public library, with reference numbers; reading greatly increased as a result. Most states have lending missionary libraries, and these should be used. A church should offer books for sale—missionary books, books on world peace, and other current social problems books. This will help stimulate reading. A constant effort should be made to encourage the reading of church magazines.

Educational opportunities are offered in recreation and fellowship occasions. Church socials featuring a certain nationality or country with decorations, games, and songs from that country lend variety to the social program and stimulate international understanding. Church-night dinners might feature certain countries by means of the menu, decorations, and music.

Special projects are avenues to understanding and appreciation and may be made both interesting and educational. A special project may be given financial support by the church, at the conclusion of which a report, together with pictures, exhibits, and other features, may be presented at a dinner for the

congregation. Again, the church may have a "world exhibit," with booths representing different countries, or a "world dinner," with tables serving that purpose. Groups within the church will also find special projects of great value. One group may support a hospital bed in China and study about hospital work there; another may support a student in school in India and study about education in that country. Other groups may support a native evangelist in Africa, contribute to work among the lepers in South America, and purchase books for the library of a Negro college, in each case a sympathetic study being made of the cause to which the group decides to contribute. The results of these studies may be shared with the entire church at a dinner meeting. The large amount of available material for such studies will make these occasions both interesting and significant.

The visits of missionaries should be made to render their full potential value to the educational program. The committee should make an effort to secure representatives from various fields from year to year. This will lead to a personal interest in each field. A wide variety of such personal contacts will greatly enrich the congregation.

Financial sharing is an educational opportunity. Money guides interest, and the investment of money in a cause or a project makes a person a partner in an enterprise. Offerings should be taken. This is a part of the educative process. The effort is not for the money, but for the sake of the person. People are thus guided into new experiences, and they find that they can reach around the world and live and labor by means of money. They may live two lives, serve in two places, and double their influence with money.

The current mission study courses are vital educational opportunities. Books should be purchased and shared; study materials should be used in various groups; the splendid array of age-level materials will be helpful; the visual education aids will help to build a collection that will be useful. The fellowship given by the interdenominational emphasis upon these areas

will strengthen the ecumenical relationship of the church. During a series of years an opportunity will be given to explore a variety of fields and causes. This should be in the mind of a committee as it works on a long-time program.

The Organization of the Committee

The world relationships committee should have a chairman, a vice-chairman, and a secretary. The membership of the committee should include representatives of various groups in the church: the men's league or club, the women's council, the church school, Christian Youth Fellowship, children's work, guild, circle, and other organizations. In a large church several subcommittees may be organized to care for various phases or projects. The subcommittees might be assigned such segments of the total program as visual education work, missionary literature, library, and school of missions. In the smaller church, individuals on a committee may be assigned specific tasks or projects. The program should fit the needs and possibilities of the church, but it should be comprehensive and challenging. The secretary should keep a file of all materials useful to the committee, of the plans made, and discussions of the success of the various plans. A librarian should serve the committee, keeping available and circulating such materials, pamphlets, and books as the committee should read. The report of the various sections of the work should be assembled and made as one report to the church board; it should be a written report. This committee has a most important function, and the growth of the church and its influence in the world will depend upon the serious and helpful work done.

Suggested Library

For the world relationships committee's reading, some of the following books should be available: *The New Order in the World,* by Brown; *Missions Tomorrow,* by Latourette; *Missionary Message of the Bible,* by Love; *Religion and the World Tomorrow,* by Van Kirk; *Concerns of a World Church,* by

Buckner; *The Church and the New World Mind,* the Drake Conference Lectures, 1944; *Christian Imperative,* by Barnes. Materials for current mission study should also be available, as well as age-level materials for leadership training.

Jesus said, "The kingdom of God is within you." Someone else has said, "If the kingdom of God does not begin in you, then as far as you are concerned it does not begin; and if the kingdom of God ends in you, then as far as you are concerned it ends." The world relationships committee has the significant task of seeing that the kingdom begins in individuals so that it may become operative in the world, and that it does not end but rather is channeled to the ends of the earth.

CHAPTER XIII

PROPERTY DEPARTMENT

AND let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them" (Exod. 25:8). So spoke the Lord to Moses in the mount. It was to be a dwelling place for the Most High and worthy of the majesty of God. When the temple at Jerusalem was finished, Solomon, in his speech of dedication, said, "I . . . have built the house for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel" (1 Kings 8:20). It was a house for the glory and honor of God. Down through the ages since those times, people have been building houses of worship to honor God and to provide a holy place where they might come into his presence.

The church building is a house of the Lord. It is more than brick and mortar, stone and beams, stately arches and stained-glass windows. It is a holy place, sacred to the Eternal God and sanctified by his presence. It is a place eloquent with the atmosphere of heaven and fragrant with the "beauty of holiness." People say again with Jacob, "This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven" (Gen. 28:17). Here the earthly is shut out, and the things of sense are dimmed; here the things of heaven are opened, and the things of the spirit prevail.

The church building is the physical home of the spiritual family. People come to love it as a part of their own life. The deepest experiences one ever knows happen here. Marriages are performed, and loved ones are memorialized. It is the scene of the holy experience of baptism, the birth of the spiritual child. Here new visions and new dedications give richer meaning to life. Here sacred memories flood the soul, imparting to the church a significance which no other building could ever possess.

A "sermon in stone," expressing sacrificial devotion, vision, and a recognition of the reality of things eternal, the church building speaks eloquently of the glory of God in the hearts of his people and is an attempt to catch that radiance in tangible beauty. Humble peasants dreamed of a cathedral in the Middle Ages and they said: "Let us build it so grandly that those who come after us will say, 'Those people believed in a great God.'" Out of consecrated lives and devoted hearts, these temples of worship have been built. People have wrought the temples of their hearts into wood and brick and stone.

Although material in nature, this building exerts a spiritual influence on the souls of those who come within its walls. Here in "dim religious light," in the presence of the symbols of Christ's sacrificial love, and in the atmosphere of holiness, something unconsciously tones their spirits. Through the weeks and months that lengthen into years, this persuasive and pervading influence molds and fashions their souls. That influence can be augmented by a subtle touch here and there, so that God becomes more real; the people know not how or why, but it is the unspoken eloquence of the sanctuary. A church ought to make that message as telling as possible. It owes that much to the worshipers.

The church is a witness to the community. The lawn, well dressed and carefully planned; the bulletin board, dignified and up to date; the house itself, well cared for and freshly kept—all these say to every passer-by: "Here is a people who love the house of the Lord." Here is a sermon that is being constantly preached to a passing throng. It should be the best witness that a congregation can give.

It is the sanctuary of the distressed, the haven of those who are sick of sin, and the solace of the sorrowing. People come with their burdens, their heartaches, and their failures. It ought to speak to them of the presence of the "Rock of Ages," of strength, and comfort and home. It should have warmth and loveliness and goodness. It ought to have a message when people come in alone; it ought to speak to lonely hearts in the

midst of a multitude; it ought to lend an air of heavenly joy to the marriage and an atmosphere of comfort to the sorrowing.

The property committee should see all this, and much more, in the church. Each member should accept his responsibility, not as a menial task, but as that of "a doorkeeper in the house of . . . God." To be entrusted with the care and upkeep of the house of the Lord is a glorious task, and a sacred one. It is something sacred to the congregation, and holy unto the Lord. It is far more than heating and lighting, repairing broken windows and squeaky doors, keeping a roof, or painting walls. It is an opportunity to minister to the congregation and glorify God. It is one of the important and influential functions in the church.

The Task of the Committee

It will be the responsibility of the property committee to study church buildings, lighting effects, elements of tone, and atmosphere; to plan for the church as an instrument of worship and guide to a more meaningful ministry in this sphere; to take care of the physical plant to see that it serves the needs of the congregation; to keep the church beautiful and worshipful; to provide for janitor service; to look after insurance and manage the property for the utmost usefulness and preserve it for the congregation. Many small and seemingly humdrum tasks will be involved in this service, but no task in connection with the Lord's house should ever be considered too small to be given thoughtful attention. It is ever the house of the Lord and the spiritual home of the congregation.

Personnel of the Committee

The personnel of the property committee is most important. These people will guide the congregation to a deeper appreciation of the holy place and will inculcate in their minds a reverence for its dignity. There should be people on the committee who are practical, and their judgment will be valuable in

purchasing fuel and furniture and arranging for repairs. There should be people who are artists, with an understanding of tone, color, and atmosphere, who may guide in beautifying the church. There should be people who are sensitive to worship and who know its meaning. All should study architecture and should know what the historic temples have expressed. There is no greater function in the church than that of the property committee; the very best people should be chosen for its personnel.

The Sanctuary

The function of the church building is far more than simply to provide a place for sitting, hearing, singing, talking, and gathering. It is far more than to provide physical equipment to take care of the organizations and public services of the congregation. The function of the church building is also that of providing an atmosphere in which the people may move in reverence and adoration toward God and experience a sense of oneness with others in their outreach toward him. There are certain fundamental requirements that underlie all worship, and these should be met as fully as possible in the church. Stability, harmony, unity, repose, correlation in form and purpose, loftiness or uplift, suggest some of the tests to which architecture must be subjected if it is to be the best aid to worship. The property committee should keep these fundamental factors before them, bearing in mind the influence of furnishings, tone, and atmosphere upon the worshiping soul. When plans are made for the future, these objectives should be held as guides. The best realizable pattern should be constantly in the mind of the committee; and when anything is done to the house of worship, it should be in accord with this pattern.

An architect should be consulted by the committee and, on the basis of his suggestions, a thorough study should be made of the building and needed improvements noted; then whatever is done through the years will be toward a unified pattern. A congregation often uses a church for a long time, and the very

best ministry should be the goal. Little adjustments made over a term of years add up to a very great improvement in the end.

Particular attention should be given to the sanctuary. Worship is central in the life of a congregation, and the hours spent in the sanctuary are the most significant hours in the week. Every attention and thought should be given to make them as meaningful as possible. The property committee, therefore, should study worship, how people worship, and aids to worship. They should do everything possible to make the sanctuary conducive to worship and to enable the people to get the utmost from the hours spent there. They should study the effects of color on walls or in the windows, the effects of lighting and of carpeting, the best arrangement of the chancel, the power of music; a knowledge of these things is indispensable to an effective ministry through the sanctuary.

The care of the church should receive the constant attention of the property committee. Proper care will enhance the respect of the congregation for the Lord's house and especially will it develop the children in habits of respect and love. Hymnbooks should be carefully kept; book racks and pew pockets should be kept repaired and neat in appearance; the furniture should always be in good repair and well polished; the walls should be kept clean and the lights replenished. The evidence of thoughtful and loving care should characterize God's house.

The Communion table represents the central experience of Christian faith and should occupy the central place in the sanctuary; it should be raised to give prominence to its message and ministry. If it is in the chancel, that will be provided for; otherwise it may be placed on a platform to give it dignity and significance. The table should be distinctly a Communion table and so symbolize the message that it preaches. At no time should it ever be used just as a table. One church has a beautiful wooden cross, outlined in chromium, always on the center of the table, except during the Communion service on Sunday morning, when the cross is placed back of the table. All

the care taken in making the Communion arrangement majestic and meaningful will be well repaid in the life of the congregation.

The baptistry should also preach its message at all times. It symbolizes the spiritual birth of a child of God. The ideal place is in the center, back of and above the Communion table. It should be beautifully and artistically arranged and thus give dignity and meaning to every baptismal service. Artistic drapery and special lighting effects will greatly enhance the significance of this ordinance. Careful planning will add immeasurably to the ministry of this symbol.

The place of the choir and the organ should have careful thought. Many churches are using the divided chancel. This arrangement removes any semblance of a "performance" or the conception of the choir's doing something for the congregation rather than with the congregation. Thus the choir is viewed as a worshiping unit of the congregation, sharing with the congregation in its approach to God. In any case the choir should be as inconspicuous as possible and not on display. The organ console may well be hidden. This obscures the mechanics of the music and magnifies rather its message and ministry. The lectern magnifies the place of God's revelation in the worship of God and in Christian living, and the pulpit magnifies the preaching function. Thus, the Lord's Supper, baptism, God's word, and preaching are all given an especial place in the house of God. The ministry of the sanctuary—its lines, design, its focal point, its uplift toward the Infinite—helps to interpret the greatness of religion.

The entrance should be studied. As people approach the house of God, they may be prepared for worship. The dignity, the inviting doors, and the worshipful aspect of the entrance will usher people into a holy presence. The foyer may add to this spirit of reverence and expectancy. It, too, should be dignified, inviting, and conducive to reverence. An appropriate picture will do much to create the right atmosphere. These

are not trivial matters; they have a profound effect on the people and what they receive from worship.

Other Parts of the Building

Careful attention should be given to other parts of the building, for the whole building is dedicated to the ministry of religion, and many things may enter into that ministry. The property committee, therefore, will study all parts of the building from the standpoint of its spiritual ministry and seek to make it as effective as possible.

The church school departments and rooms are actually a part of the educational curriculum. Here impressions will be received, habits inaugurated, and appreciations engendered. The worship rooms should have the dignity and beauty of the house of the Lord. Worship centers, colored glass windows, carpets, and pews will provide an atmosphere for a growing experience in finding the reality of God. Classrooms can be given a meaningful message by masterpieces of art on the walls. The place where religious instruction is given should speak of religion. A progressive program can be projected across the years, thus greatly enhancing the ministry of the church.

The recreation or social rooms should be appropriate for their purpose; but they, too, should have the atmosphere of religion. The church misses something that does not surround every function with the message of religion. The windows, pictures, draperies, and color tones may all be used to give a dignity and significance that will "tone" every occasion to the high ideals of religion.

Many churches are providing wedding parlors. That means that an artistic and dignified room is set apart for weddings. It may be used for a general purpose parlor and still be quickly arranged for weddings. A wedding is a high occasion in the life of any couple, and when couples seek the church for the setting of their wedding, the church ought to surround it with all the dignity and beauty of religion. Candelabra, an altar, and

other appropriate aids will greatly enhance the meaning of the ceremony.

Church parlors are an asset. Artistically arranged and beautifully furnished, they give tone to every meeting held in them. Every church meeting ought to be held in the most challenging surroundings. A committee meeting is far better in a quiet, dignified, restful parlor, than in the "basement" around a rough table. Better work is done for the kingdom and for the church. Ladies' meetings in the church should be in an atmosphere comparable to the best homes in the church. Something intangible but very real is added to meetings in such an atmosphere.

Renovation of the Building

Every church grows older and becomes dingy. Every church, however, could be kept fresh and clean if the property committee would carefully work out a plan of renovation for a period of years and carry out a portion of the program each year. The expense can thus be kept within the means of the congregation. So many times renovation is delayed because the need has *accumulated,* the total cost having become too great for the church to meet at one time. The property committee can do much to keep the congregation aware of renovation needs.

A similar plan may be used in connection with needed improvements. As churches grow older and programs and times change, church members often feel that the building should be "modernized." It is not always immediately possible to undertake such a major project, but a total plan can be worked out and a progress schedule made, and the church will find joy in achievement over a period of years. Often members of the church will undertake projects as memorials or as a service to the church. Most churches could well give study to the improvement of their buildings.

Building Custodian

The property committee will generally have charge of the service rendered by the custodian and be responsible for keep-

ing the position filled. The services of the custodian involve far more than keeping fires, sweeping floors, and locking up the building. Something of the dignity and significance of the church should be interpreted to the custodian, and he should enter into it as "a doorkeeper in the house of . . . God." The attitude, ideals, and appreciation on the part of the "janitor" have almost as much to do with the atmosphere and tone of the church as those of the preacher. His reverence for the house of the Lord will be reflected in its cleanliness. His appreciation of the work of the church will be evidenced by his response to every call. This is a difficult task to perform, but the person who does it as a ministry performs a real service to the Kingdom of God. Provision ought to be made for sickness, liability, and old age benefits, so that the church may give Christian care to the employees of the church, at least comparable to the benefits provided by business. The church ought to be Christian in dealing with those who work in the service of the kingdom.

Insurance

Protection of the church property is an obligation of those to whom it is entrusted. Under the guidance of a competent insurance man, an analysis ought to be made of the property, both stationary and movable. A careful listing should be made of everything that belongs to the church, and that list should be kept up to date. After a study of the property, its value as it is, and its replacement value, the proper amount of insurance needed to protect the congregation fully ought to be taken. Many churches are underinsured, and a great burden is thrown on a congregation when such property is destroyed. An experience of this kind often hampers the program of a congregation for years. Insurance should be taken for a three- or a five-year term, with one-third or one-fifth of it expiring each year, so that the insurance load is equalized for the church budget. This important matter should be thoroughly studied by the property committee, and the church board should be

made acquainted with the values of an adequate insurance program.

Musical Instruments

The musical instruments in the church are a part of its worship program. They should be the finest possible. The organ is a major instrument in worship. Its tones call the people to worship and tune their spirits to the Eternal. It will last for a long time and should be the best the church can afford. The pianos are important. They are used by groups in worship and in programs worthy of the church. They should be aids and not hindrances. They should, therefore, be of a quality that will give dignity to a church program and should always be kept in tune. It is simply not true that just anything is good enough for the children. These little ones are being trained in respect and love for the church, in worship and reverence, and to think of the church as the greatest institution in the world. Let them have the best, therefore, that they may grow in their appreciation of the church.

The Parsonage

The church should have a parsonage. A parsonage gives a minister stability and creates a closer relationship between him and the congregation. When there are functions at the parsonage, or when the pastor has "open house" for the congregation, there is a sense of mutual sharing that quickens the pastor-people relationship. The parsonage should be adequate and well cared for. The congregation should see to it that the outside of the house and the permanent trees and shrubs are such as to create pride in possession. In conference with the pastor, the committee should plan that the inside should be so kept that it will be conducive to the happiness and well-being of the minister's family. Most congregations are anxious to have the house well kept, comfortable, and up to date. Very few members of the church ever invade the privacy of the home life of the minister or infringe upon the family affairs. Even the next-door-to-the-church location is a blessing far outweigh-

ing the so-called "borrowings." If the church has no parsonage, the property committee should carefully study the matter and consider the advisability of undertaking the forward step of procuring one.

The Outside of the Church

Hundreds of people see the outside of a church who never enter its doors. The exterior speaks its message to them, and that is all they will ever know about it. The church whose members hear people say as they pass, "Isn't that a beautiful corner!" is performing a valuable ministry. The grounds ought to be well landscaped and carefully tended. Some group in the church will do that for the smallest congregation. A dignified, well-placed, and plainly lettered sign ought to be in front of the church. It should be lighted at night. It will be the "greeting" of the congregation to every passer-by. Many churches are so situated that it would be a distinct advantage for the tower or the entrance to be floodlighted at night. Churches ought to speak to the community. They ought to attract attention.

Relationship with Other Departments

While the property committee has primary responsibility with respect to the building and grounds, it will be recognized that other departments also have an interest here. The property committee should sustain a close cooperation with the worship and devotional life committee in planning for the enrichment of worship by means of anything that can be done in connection with the building and its furnishings. The worship and devotional life committee will be studying this important function and will frequently want to confer with the property committee. Together they may work out a long-time program. The education committee will also have an interest in all that affects education, and its members will discover needs that will be shared with the property committee. The committee will seek to guide the total church toward a recognition of its needs in this area and

will devise plans and methods for meeting these needs. This will be a task of the church; but the property committee will be responsible for the study, the vision, and the inspiration necessary to bring results.

Organization of the Property Committee

The committee should have a chairman, a vice-chairman, and a secretary. In a large church, responsibilities may be divided, various subcommittees caring for such items as insurance, parsonage, heating and lighting, future plans, and the like. In a smaller church these assignments may be made to individuals. The secretary should keep records of all meetings, discussions, bids for fuel and work, and contracts for work. These records will be of value when similar work needs to be done later. Reports of all meetings should be made to the church board and should be in writing. From time to time, it may be well to report desirable things that may be done far in the future. This will give inspiration for advance and keep the church looking ahead.

This committee will greatly influence the church and the program of the church. What the church property is twenty years ahead will depend upon the vision and fidelity of the property committee now. It is a great and sacred responsibility to have the care and oversight of the house of the Lord.

CHAPTER XIV

THE CHURCH BOARD AT WORK

NOTHING is more important to a congregation than the work of the church board. Nothing augurs better for a congregation than a church board that works. Nothing really great or significant ever happens in the life of a congregation that is not planned, prayed over, and worked for. If the church is important, it deserves hard work by the best people in it. The church's program will take time, effort, and study; but no results of consequence ever come without these. The church expects the board to work.

Importance of the Plans

Church board planning is an effort to build a structure of life and service in which each member of the congregation can find a place. It is mapping a campaign of conquest in which each soldier of the cross may have a part. It is organizing a business in which each member may have a worthy share and which will serve its clientele in an acceptable manner. Plans are the framework of the structure, the strategy of conquest, and the blueprints of a program.

A committee of ten spends its time in planning and brings its culled wisdom to a board of one hundred, and the board profits by the committee's time; the church board brings its studied wisdom to a congregation of twenty-five hundred, and the congregation profits by the committee's time. Time spent in planning is the groundwork of the church program. Plans must be made to guide the congregation to its task in the Kingdom of God.

Planning Early

A church must begin to plan for its work far ahead. The year's work should be made months ahead of the time that it

is to start. Most churches plan their program to begin with the fall work in September. In that case, plans should be made in committees in June and July, so that all may have cleared the church board not later than August.

In one large church all the leadership personnel comes together in four midweek dinner meetings in June; in these the entire program of the church is planned, correlated, and prepared for launching in September. Another church has a series of committee meetings during June and July, at which the total program of the church is built for a year in advance and objectives formulated for the years ahead. Every department committee does its final detail work by the first of September, and the church program gets under way that month.

Every planning period is important to successful church work. The committee must study plans, the church board must review and pass on them, and they must be received by the congregation before they gather force and power. That takes time, and success depends upon that time. Plan ahead, and give time to the planning.

Working Studiously

In one church that follows the plan of having its committees meet in June and July to lay out the work for a year ahead, each meeting is scheduled for a period of two hours or more, and half of the time is given to a study of the work of a specific department of the church. Books, pamphlets, and other material are reviewed; then plans are made for these to be read by the committee members. Attention is then given to the program itself, which is outlined in detail, month by month. When this work is completed, the plans are prepared for presentation to the church board. After adoption, they are mimeographed and, together with similar reports from the various other committees, put into booklet form, thus comprising the church's total program for the year. These church program booklets are distributed at the program-launching dinner in September. As the process unfolds, a chart is made of the program, month by

month, with a place for each department. This makes a graphic presentation of the total program of the church.

Working at the Plans

Some definite plan should be adopted to keep the program moving and to provide for its continuous review and execution as it unfolds. Quarterly meetings of committees may be held during the year, at which the plans that have been completed are discussed and evaluated and suggested changes for the following year are recorded. The next quarter's work is then taken up; assignments are made and details are filled in. Reports of progress and the future plans are made at each board meeting, and the total group is kept informed on the activities of the several committees. Or there may be bimonthly meetings of all committees for forty-five minutes, followed immediately by the board meeting, lasting an hour. The pastor and the chairman of each committee may prepare an agenda in advance for each committee meeting. The committees then evaluate the work and make assignments. Either of the foregoing plans may well be combined with a dinner meeting. Thus each department of the church may be kept functioning at full capacity, with the total plan moving forward smoothly.

Sharing with the Congregation

An informed congregation is a cooperating congregation. The plans of the church affect the total life of the church. People cannot enter into the work unless they are aware of plans and objectives. It is important, therefore, that the board should share its aims with the congregation.

Program-launching Week provides an opportunity for presenting the total program to the congregation in a unified manner and of giving the inspiration of mobilization for advance.

Another method that has proved successful is to schedule a series of church dinners for October and part of November, with a dinner assigned to each committee. At the dinner sponsored by a given committee, its ideals, responsibilities, and

plans are presented, thus enabling the whole congregation to get a clearer understanding of the significance of the work of the department in question. Over a period of years, the whole church will grow in appreciation of the work of the board and become increasingly cooperative in the plans of the church.

Still another plan that will be found effective is an annual board meeting scheduled as an "open board meeting" for the congregation. This should be a dinner meeting, with a regular board procedure making up the program. Each committee will make its regular report, and the usual work of the evening will be done. A meeting of this kind will be well attended and will give the congregation an insight into the work of the board.

Social Fellowship in the Board

Perhaps enough opportunity has not been given for social fellowship among members of the board. In large churches they are often not well acquainted and have no opportunity to become acquainted. Unity and comradeship may be created by arranging opportunities for social contacts, which will, in turn, enhance the spirit and interest of the members of the board and add greatly to the effectiveness of their work.

A small church adopted the plan of having a bimonthly dinner, followed by the regular board meeting. While the necessity for fuller acquaintance was not a factor, it did bring a spirit of comradeship that strengthened the work. Another church made a practice of having a board dinner annually, with the regular meeting following. It was a significant occasion and led to a warmth of fellowship not felt before the plan was adopted. Another church arranged the August meeting for an informal ice cream or watermelon social, following the board meeting. The fact that members began looking forward to it in June gave evidence of the contribution it made to their fellowship.

The Church Board Meeting

The church board meeting is significant. Here the plans of the church are made, and here the progress of the church hinges.

What is done in any year conditions the years ahead. It may open the way for greater things or hinder their realization. In no small measure, the destiny of the church hangs on every board meeting. The work in which it is engaged is of interest to Another, and God is an interested watcher at every meeting. The work of his kingdom is in the hands of these men, and every vote may advance or hinder it.

The meeting should be held in a room in the church that breathes the presence of God. It should have an atmosphere of worship and should create a spirit of reverence. Every meeting should open with a devotional period. The presence of God ought to be felt, and all that is done should be done as unto him. There should be an orderly procedure. "Let all things be done decently and in order" (1 Cor. 14:40).

All committees should make reports, and they should be in writing. This requirement makes it possible to be sure that thought has been given to the reports and that the total work of the church is presented at each meeting. It also enables the secretary to file the reports. Many meetings consist of little else but financial reports and discussions, as though the work of the church hinged on finances. This *is* an essential element; but education, worship, world outlook, and other things are likewise essential functions of the church.

It is well to have some member of the committee, other than the chairman, make the report occasionally. During the year each member may well make the report. This adds interest to the meeting and shares responsibility. The meeting should be democratic. Each member has a responsibility and should feel that his presence and participation is important. Sometimes a committee is appointed, or some arrangement is made, to encourage attendance. No one should be allowed to hold lightly the matter of attendance at the meeting of the church board.

The meeting should be concluded with a brief period of meditation and prayer. Plans have been made, and God's work has been under consideration. It should be reviewed before Him before the meeting adjourns. The board meeting should be a

spiritual experience. It has to do with business, but it is divine business, related to the Spirit of God and the immortal souls of men. It is God's business.

The Minister and the Board

The minister is an ex officio member of each committee; his training in the work of the church, his experience in plans and programs, and his constant study of new developments in every field will be a source of help and inspiration in all departments. All the counsel and experience he can share with the committees will add to the effectiveness of the program. He will interpret the objectives of the kingdom, the spiritual issues involved, and the plans that can be realized. The members of committees will interpret the mind of the congregation and the reactions of its members to the plans and programs. Together they share in making plans to meet the needs of people—plans that stretch toward the ideals of the kingdom.

The minister should be present in every board meeting. He will give inspiration for the work of the committees and will interpret the spiritual significance of the plans presented. His experience may help to guide in untried paths or in meeting difficult problems. He has given study to church administration and should be able to see the work as a whole. Whatever experience or training he may have to share should be sought by the church board. He is the executive of the church; when plans are adopted he will give encouragement, inspiration, and assistance in all efforts to achieve the goals that have been set. The comradeship of the minister and the church board should be intimate, wholehearted, and vital. They have a common task, the advancement of the kingdom; a common concern, the progress of the church; and a common responsibility, loyalty to God.

CHAPTER XV

A LOOK AHEAD

THE world is in difficult days. It is certainly no time for the church to drift or to be lax in its responsibility. The Madras Conference expressed the conviction that the church is called to live and to give life today in a world shaken to its foundations. Students of civilization—sociologists, historians, philosophers, economists, and others—are saying that the world is in one of those periods of history during which one era comes to an end and another begins and that the culture now emerging will probably control the path of civilization for the next five hundred years. In the midst of this crisis, this far-reaching change, this world-deciding period, the church is to give its witness, proclaim its truth, and exert its influence. It is a significant opportunity—suppose that the church could mold the philosophy, give direction to the new patterns of thought, and lay the foundations for the coming era!—and it is a grave responsibility.

We may be aware of this critical situation, so far as it relates to the church, and yet fail to sense a personal relationship to it. Congregations and individuals often lose sight of the part they play in what we term "the church." The church is made up of individuals, whose total witness measures its influence and determines its impress upon society. The church is made up of congregations, which guide lives and which have fellowship in groups of churches, in world-wide communions, and in the great ecumenical fellowship of Christianity. The structure that we call "the church" rests upon individuals and congregations. It is important, therefore, that the individual should feel that *he* can do something about the task and goal of the church and that congregations should feel that *they*

have a contribution to make and that *both* should set about to make the church, in this larger sense, as effective as possible. To do less than our best cheats not only us but the whole Christian movement as well—and all that depends upon that movement. We face the tremendous tasks of the future, knowing the responsibilities and determined to do our full share in meeting them. In order to do this, the church surely will need to think intelligently, to study the problems of civilization, to marshal its resources, to plan its strategy, to adopt new methods to meet new conditions, and to give itself to sacrificial service as never before in its history. Only in so doing will the church enter the open door of opportunity presented by the era now being born.

The church is in the midst of a world in which the problems of civilization are more intricate than ever before. Modern science has made the world a close-knit neighborhood. The people of the world live in each other's front yards. All the things that they do are done in sight and hearing of all their neighbors. Trade, travel, communication, education, culture, history—all the past, present, and future aims and ambitions of peoples—mix and mingle in these neighborhood affairs. Divergent cultural backgrounds, various racial viewpoints, differing economic levels, varying philosophies of life, develop points of tension and misunderstanding as they would in any city block. All the areas of corporate living are involved in this intricate neighborhood. Statesmanship, commercial enterprise, and economic desires all face these tensions and are baffled by them. The church is to serve in a world in which tensions are taut, misunderstandings are rife, suspicions are lurking, and deep resentments are nursed. It is no easy task, but it is a challenging opportunity.

Modern civilization has placed great strain on the individual. The experience of the war revealed that one of the deep and extensive ailments of our social body was emotional instability. The frustrations of life, the hurry of the modern world, and the conflicting desires and goals to which we are subject have

broken down the emotional health of the individual. Here the church faces a vitally important ministry. The message of the church, with its faith in God as the center of life, can heal the emotionally ill. The church must give itself more studiously to this ministry.

The home is breaking up in a futile effort to meet changing conditions. The rapid changes in rural and urban life, the entrance of the homemaker into the business world, the opportunities for children in economic life, the varied interests of members of the family in social affairs, easy transportation, the influence of radio and motion pictures—all these have descended almost overnight upon the life of the home, shattering its unity and stability as with a mailed fist. In the midst of this disintegration the church stands forth as a center around which the family may keep its unity. The church must continue to serve in this unifying capacity and must learn to serve the family in an even greater degree in the future if the consequences of the breakdown of the home are to be overcome. This is an area in which the church must look ahead.

Civilization is threatened with collapse upon the rocks of social maladjustment. Economic groups, racial groups, industrial groups, educational groups, and a host of others insist upon separating and segregating themselves from society at large. Out of this lack of fellowship, suspicions and fears arise. The church is the one social solvent. It serves all classes, all groups, and all areas; and it brings them into a common fellowship.

The church must give meaning to life. In the midst of the pressure of things, the means by which we live have become the ends for which we live; and these means, having no significance in themselves, eventually prove to be but empty trinkets, and life therefore seems no longer to have any meaning. The swift pace of modern times has shut out the view of life in its broader ranges and its far horizons, with the result that life has lost its great objectives and worthful goals. The church must face the task of interpreting life, giving significance to

life, and challenging people to life. If the church fails here, the task will be attempted by others, but the lifting of men to the position of sons of God will not be central.

Mankind faces the desperate necessity of acquiring a sense of world citizenship. With the shrinking of the world into a neighborhood, our individualistic nationalisms, racial cleavages, and cultural separatism have constantly fomented conflicts and clashes. But during these conflicts and clashes, while the world's sense of community grew more and more dim, the church not only maintained its community but even strengthened it. It seems to be the only possible source of world fellowship and brotherhood. Again it is the opportunity of the church to hold the world together, and every congregation needs to face this serious fact and set itself to the task of making its contribution to its achievement.

The church needs to look ahead in the rural field. This nation was built by the leadership and influence of rural churches. With changing conditions and shifting populations, the strategy of the church for a rural ministry has not been effectively developed. The moral responsibility here is of vast proportions. The church must give itself to rural leadership, study the needs, and plan a strategy that will give spiritual leadership in these areas. The community in rural sections has broken up; people shop at distant centers, find amusement in out-of-the-community affairs, and there is no sense of unity or community left. The church seems to be the only institution that can build a community to which people actually belong, which can once again bring stability and spiritual solidarity to the rural peoples. It is the task of building character and life, not only for citizenship, but for the Kingdom of God.

Likewise, the church needs to look ahead in the urban field. The city presents grave problems in the congestion of its population, the leisure time of its people, the commercialized recreation, the temptations of variety, and the shifting of its inhabitants. In the main, the program of the urban church has changed very little to meet changing conditions; in fact, it has

changed very little in being transplanted from the village to the city. The urban church has about the same run of services, about the same groups for men and women, and about the same program for young people as the average church in the good country town. The church will need to develop a strategy for the modern city. The social and recreational programs of the aggressive city challenge the church. A program designed to fit the needs of people and one that will minister to them in the light of these pressing needs of their urban lives—as over against one that has simply been fitted to the traditional pattern of church services—will make a new day for the city church.

The church has a unique place in building moral foundations for the structure of civilization. No civilization is stronger than its moral foundations. It has been pointed out that in the youth of an era or a civilization, religion has always been strong and has had its influence in the laws, the family, the education, and the ideals of people. As civilization has grown older and become flabby, religion has grown lax and less virile, and the moral foundations of society have begun to crack and crumble. We pay a terrific price for the ideals of our civilization in time of war, but the church has the responsibility of building those ideals and maintaining them in war and in peace. This is an indispensable function of the church and must be recognized as such. It is not enough for the church to maintain its life and hold the gains already made; it must give itself and its influence to the saving of a world.

The primary function of the church is to evangelize the world. The world is now in the midst of one of its critical transition periods. Great populations will modernize in the years just ahead. Education will flourish, scientific improvement will come, and rapid advances will be made in every field of human endeavor. It remains for the church to determine whether this modernization will be consonant with religious ideals, whether this scientific improvement will be accompanied by spiritual advance, and whether the entry into these new areas of human endeavor will be motivated by the ideal of unselfish service or

that of selfish exploitation. The world is going somewhere, and the church must point the way.

The areas of geographical evangelization are still open, and more territory must still be claimed for the King. If it is not, it will be claimed by others for Antichrist. Moreover, there are vast areas of *thought* that must be evangelized for the King of kings. The world is being plagued as never before by materialistic philosophies, and the end is not yet; as never before, it must be given an opportunity to hear the words of a spiritual philosophy. It has been said that we face either Christianity or chaos. We must evangelize the world, or else secular forces will paganize it. By all the hopes of the future, the church is faced with a tremendous task.

The church never faces its task without the resources of the Lord of the church. Led by a divine Spirit, and set for a divine task, the church looks ahead. Here again we may hear the voice of confidence, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18).

APPENDIX

CHURCH PROGRAM CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER

Labor Day (first Monday)
Home-coming, or Mobilization Sunday
Program-launching Week
Go-to-College Sunday
Promotion Sunday and Rally Day
Religious Education Week

OCTOBER

Fall "Membership Registration" Month
Stewardship Education Month
World Wide Communion Sunday (first Sunday)
Week of the Ministry
Christian Literature Week
Reformation Sunday (Sunday prior to Oct. 31)

NOVEMBER

Budget Month (if year begins in January)
American Missions Day (first Sunday)
World Order Sunday (Sunday before Armistice Day)
Men and Missions Sunday
Missionary Education and Thanksgiving Offering
Thanksgiving Sunday and Family Thanksgiving Emphasis

DECEMBER

Christmas Emphasis Through the Month
Reading Gospel by Membership
Women's Day (first Sunday)
Universal Bible Sunday (second Sunday)
Benevolence Education and Offering
Christmas Family Emphasis and Christmas in the Home

JANUARY

New Year's Day
Universal Week of Prayer
Dedication of Pledges (if church year begins in January)
Christian Higher Education Sunday
Youth Week (beginning last Sunday of month)

FEBRUARY

Spring "Membership Registration" Month
Begin Pre-Easter Program

Race Relations Day (second Sunday)
Brotherhood Day (Federal Council)
Week of Compassion
Brotherhood Week (National Conference of Christians and Jews)

MARCH

Ash Wednesday—Beginning of Lent (variable)
World Day of Prayer (variable: first Friday in Lent)
Foreign Missions Day (first Sunday)
Church Membership Classes
Pre-Easter Evangelism
Reading Gospel by Membership
Missionary Education for Easter Offering

APRIL

Palm Sunday—Decision Day (variable: Sunday before Easter)
Easter Week of Prayer
Candlelight Communion (Thursday before Easter)
Good Friday (Friday before Easter)
Easter and Easter Offering
Begin Pentecost Program

MAY

Reading Acts to Pentecost
Stewardship Education
Family Week (week preceding Mother's Day)
Mother's Day (second Sunday)
Rural Life Sunday (variable: fifth Sunday after Easter)
Pentecost—Birthday of the Church and Christian Unity Sunday (variable: seventh Sunday after Easter)

JUNE

Vacation Church School
Planning Program for Next Year
Children's Day Education and Offering (second Sunday)
Father's Day (third Sunday)
Achievement Day (third Sunday)

JULY

Independence Day
Complete Plans for Next Year
Inaugurate Summer Program

AUGUST

Analyze Enrollment for Fall Program
Complete Personnel for Fall Program
Lay Plans for Fall Mobilization

FAMILY CHURCH MEMBERSHIP FILE CARD

NAME ADDRESS PHONE

BUSINESS ADDRESS PHONE

DISTRICT	APPROX. AGE	BIRTH DATE	MEMBERSHIP HOW? WHEN?	CHURCH ACTIVITY	PLEDGING	REMARKS DEATHS, WEDDINGS, COLLEGE, PERSONAL ITEMS OF NOTE
HUSBAND						
WIFE						
CHILDREN	AGE					

REMARKS—OTHER RELATIVES IN CHURCH; FAMILY ITEMS OF NOTE; PARTICULAR CIVIC OR COMMUNITY ACHIEVEMENT OF INDIVIDUALS; PERSONAL HISTORY OF INTEREST.

[This may be a 6×8 card]

TALENT AND SERVICE SURVEY

Name_____Address_____Phone_____

Business_____Address_____Phone_____

1. Will attend church school: Department_____ Class_____
2. Will work in church school: Teach_____ Assist_____ Dept._____
3. Will attend women's group____Previous office_____Work_____
4. Will attend men's club_____Previous office_____Work_____
5. Will attend youth group_____Previous office_____Work_____
6. Music: Will play piano____; organ____; other instrument_____

   Will sing in choir_____ Youth_____ Adult_____
7. Will assist in youth work: Previous experience_____

   Young people's sponsor_____ Children's work_____ Scouts_____
8. Will do directed calling____; provide auto____; flowers in season____
9. Will assist in office work_____; typing_____; mailing_____
10. Hobbies_____; other interests_____
11. Offices held, or work previously done _____

    _____
12. Interested in following work not listed above_____

    _____

    _____

[May be printed or mimeographed on a 5×8 card]

COMMUNITY SURVEY CARD

District_____ Block_____ Vacant_____ Information refused_____ Out_____

Family_____ Address_____

Race_____ Telephone_____

RELATION*	NAME	AGE†	CHECK HERE IF MEMBER	NAME AND LOCATION OF CHURCH WHERE MEMBER	CHECK HERE IF PREFERS THIS CHURCH	CHURCH, SCHOOL ATTENDING
HUSBAND						
WIFE						

Names of others using this address, not members of family‡_____

*Use "Son," "Daughter," "Grandmother."
†Use age range for adults: 21-31, 31-40, up.
‡Use separate survey cards for these people.

Date_____ Information secured by_____

Use back of card for additional information and follow-up recommendation.

SILENT ROLL CALL

Name_____

Address_____

Phone_____

☐ Child under 12 years

☐ Youth, 12 to 23 ☐ Adult, above 23

☐ Member of this church

☐ Member of another church in city

☐ Not a member of any church

☐ Visitor from out of city

☐ Newcomer to city

☐ Would consider joining this church

☐ Desire special prayers

☐ Would like pastor to call

Write on other side names of people who are sick and mark "Sick" and names of prospects and mark "Prospects."

EVANGELISTIC PROSPECT RECORD

FAMILY NAME	MR.	MRS.	MISS

CHILDREN'S NAMES AND AGES

RESIDENCE_____ PHONE_____

Information

Date_____ Source_____

First call: Callers_____ Date_____

Second call: Callers_____ Date_____

[May be mimeographed on 8½×11 page, and kept in loose-leaf notebook]

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH SCHOOL

Bible School Permanent Record **General and Yearly Information**

Name_____ Address_____ Telephone_____

Date of Birth_____Place_____Date Enrolled_____Date Baptized_____

Father's Name_____Church_____Business_____Address_____

Mother's Name_____Church_____Business_____Address_____

Day School_____Grade_____Teacher_____Hobby_____

Extracurricular Interests_____ Talents_____

Kindergarten History _____

_____

	First Grade	Second Grade	Third Grade	Fourth Grade
Public School Record Grade Teacher Noteworthy data regarding activity and student life				
Church School Record Teacher Participation and attendance; any interesting information about year's work or activity				

	Fifth Grade	Sixth Grade	Seventh Grade	Eighth Grade
Public School Record Teacher School achievements Scholastic and extracurricular activities				
Church School Record Teacher Attendance Special work and participation Facts of interest				
	Ninth Grade	Tenth Grade	Eleventh Grade	Twelfth Grade
Public School Record Teacher School achievements School and other activities				
Church School Record Teacher Special work and activity in church or school work				
College work Where Career chosen, etc.				

EVANGELISTIC VISITATION CARD

FAMILY NAME	MR.	MRS.	MISS

CHILDREN'S NAMES AND AGES

ADDRESS: RES. _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS: BUS. _____ PHONE _____

Information

(Use other side if more space is needed)

[Size 4x6]

METHOD OF PRESENTING A BUDGET

For the preaching of the word, conducting services, pastoral calling, ministry to the sick and bereaved, administration of the program of the church - - - - - - - - - - $--------

For the care of the church and grounds, custodian, clean and warm building, repair and upkeep of building, year-round use of facilities - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - $--------

For the ministry of music in public services, training of choirs (adult, youth, and children), director, and organist - - $--------

For clerical help, office work, correspondence, membership records, telephoning, mailing, financial records - - - - $--------

For keeping the building in readiness for all services, gas, light, water, insurance protection, _____services during year $--------

For keeping you informed as to work of the church, printing, bulletin, church paper, postage, and letters - - - - $--------

For promotion of fellowship, matron and helpers, youth socials, banquets, and other church family meetings - - - - $--------

For brotherhood enterprises—helping in a great world-wide program of education, preaching, hospitals, children's work, extending our church around the world - - - - - - $--------

For payments on property—a permanent investment in our church which serves our city, state, and world - - - $--------

Total - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - $--------

A SAMPLE BUDGET

Current-Expense Budget

I. *Salaries*
   1. Pastor
   2. Staff in office
   3. Custodians
   4. Pulpit supply

II. *Music*
   1. Organist
   2. Director
   3. Supplies
   4. Choirs

III. *Upkeep of Building*
   1. Fuel, lights, water, gas
   2. Telephone
   3. Insurance
   4. Improvements
   5. Repairs

IV. *Operating Expenses*
   1. Advertising
   2. Bulletins
   3. Office supplies
   4. Postage
   5. Flowers
   6. Miscellaneous

V. *Education—Religious and Missionary*
   1. Staff or workers
   2. Vacation school, or week-day school
   3. Summer conferences and school
   4. Conventions and institutes

VI. *Pension Payments*

Missionary Budget

I. *Unified Promotion*

Cooperating Causes

1. Foreign missions
2. Higher education
3. Religious education
4. Church extension
5. The ministry
6. Christian unity
7. State missions
8. Home missions
9. International Convention
10. National City Christian Church

II. *Other Missionary Causes*

1. Benevolence
2. State missions (when not in above)
3. City missions
4. Colleges (when not in above)
5. Other worthy causes

EVERY-MEMBER PLEDGE—THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

"Give an account of thy stewardship."—Luke 16:2.

As a steward of the manifold riches of God, I desire to give an account of my stewardship by paying the following pledge for the extension of his kingdom. This pledge is made on the weekly basis for one year, or until notice is given.

For Current Expenses

$	$5	$2	$1	75c	50c	25c	c

For Missions and Benevolences

$	$5	$2	$1	75c	50c	25c	c

Check the amount above you wish to pledge weekly.

This pledge truly represents my interest in the kingdom and is made in accordance with the blessings with which God has prospered me. "Upon the first day of the week [systematically] let every one of you [individually] lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him [proportionately]" (1 Cor. 16:2).

Name _____

Address _____ Phone _____

(This pledge represents an increase of $_____ per week for current expenses, and $_____ per week for missions and benevolences.)

QUARTERLY PLEDGE REPORT

For your information, and to check our records, the amount paid on your church pledge to the end of the quarter, ----------, 194----, is as follows:

	Pledged for quarter	Paid for quarter	In arrears for quarter
Current Expenses,	$--------	$--------	$--------

No.---------

Very truly yours,

Date----------

----------Treasurer.

NOTE: If pledge is in arrears, it is hoped that you will make a special effort to bring it up to date. The church must depend upon the faithfulness of each member, and your cooperation is greatly appreciated. This report is made to each pledger to keep the record up to date, and any question about it will be gladly discussed by the treasurer. THANKS for your loyal support of the church.

QUARTERLY PLEDGE REPORT

For your information, and to check our records, the amounts paid on your church pledges to the end of the quarter, ----------, 194----, are as follows:

	Pledged for quarter	Paid for quarter	In arrears for quarter
Current Expense	$--------	$--------	$--------
Missions and Benevolences	$--------	$--------	$--------

No.---------

Very truly yours,

Date----------

----------Treasurer.

NOTE: If pledges are in arrears, it is hoped that you will make a special effort to bring them up to date. The church must depend upon the faithfulness of each member, and your cooperation is greatly appreciated. This report is made to each pledger to keep the record up to date, and any question about it will be gladly discussed by the treasurer. THANKS for your loyal support of the church.

[Cards may be enclosed in window envelopes]

MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT—CHRISTIAN CHURCH

RECEIPTS—

Total to date $----------

For month $----------

EXPENDITURES—

Budget, 1946			Total to Date (including last month)	Current Month
Salaries		$00,000.00		
Pastor	$000.00		$--------	$--------
Custodian	000.00		$--------	$--------
Choir director	000.00		$--------	$--------
Organist	000.00		$--------	$--------
Secretary	000.00		$--------	$--------
Financial secretary	000.00		$--------	$--------
Light, Water, Gas, Phone		$000.00		
Light	000.00		$--------	$--------
Water	000.00		$--------	$--------
Gas	000.00		$--------	$--------
Phone	000.00		$--------	$--------
Printing, Supplies		$000.00		
Church paper	000.00		$--------	$--------
Bulletin	000.00		$--------	$--------
Office printing	000.00		$--------	$--------
Office supplies	000.00		$--------	$--------
Repairs, Upkeep		$0,000.00		
On church	000.00		$--------	$--------
On parsonage	000.00		$--------	$--------
Insurance		$000.00		
Advertising		$000.00		
Missions		$0,000.00		
State	000.00		$--------	$--------
Unified Promotion	000.00		$--------	$--------
Colleges	000.00		$--------	$--------
Benevolences	000.00		$--------	$--------
Totals		$--------	$--------	$--------

[May be mimeographed for board meeting]

FINANCIAL RECORD CARD

1. CHURCH MEMBER
2. CHURCH SCHOOL MEMBER
3. REGULAR CHURCH ATTENDANT
4. MEMBER YOUTH GROUP
5. MEMBER MEN'S ORGANIZATION
6. MEMBER WOMEN'S COUNCIL
7. _____
8. _____

NAME _____ RES. ADD. _____ PHONE _____

BUSINESS _____ ADDRESS _____ PHONE _____

OTHERS EMPLOYED ADDRESS PHONE

		AFFILIATION USE KEY NUMBER ABOVE	WEEKLY PLEDGE									
			1943		1944		1945		1946		1947	
			LOCAL	BENV.	LOCAL	BENV.	LOCAL	BENV.	LOCAL	BENV.	LOCAL	BENV.
HUSBAND												
WIFE												
CHILDREN	AGE											
OTHERS												

(FRONT)

CANVASSERS

1943	1944	1945	1946	1947
NOTES				

NOTES _____

(BACK)

PLAN OF PROCEDURE—BASIS FOR A CONSTITUTION

The following is a suggested "Plan of Procedure," which has been compiled by a subcommittee of the Local Church Life Committee, Home and State Missions Planning Council, from a number of plans studied. It is not intended to be inclusive and comprehensive in scope. No one congregation will be likely to adopt it in its entirety. Those sections of it should be selected which are most suitable to the needs of the particular congregation, and other sections substituted to suit local requirements. The departments outlined in this book may be used instead of the departments suggested here.

I. Departmental Organization

The functional and expressional activities of the church may be organized under the following departments, with a chairman as the head of each department: (1) worship and devotional life; (2) Christian education; (3) evangelism; (4) finance, stewardship, and maintenance; (5) missions, benevolence, and higher education; (6) membership cultivation; (7) the Christian home. Each department should meet regularly to conduct the business for which it is responsible.

Note: For smaller churches, the following groups, with combinations of the above, may be made: (1) worship and devotional life; (2) education and the home; (3) evangelism and membership cultivation; (4) stewardship and missions.

1. The worship and devotional life department is responsible for the conduct of public worship in the church, its pulpit supply, the baptismal services, proper preparation of Communion and its serving, the music of the church, ushering, midweek prayer and fellowship services, the encouragement of devotional life among its membership, and the supplying of the congregation with devotional literature.

The worship department may organize itself into a series of subcommittees to care for these various responsibilities.

2. The department of Christian education is responsible for the total educational program of the church, including church school, leadership training, vacation and weekday schools, young people's societies and conferences, and, in cooperation with the department of missions, the missionary education program.

The education department's personnel may include: (1) superintendent of the church school; (2) assistant superintendent of the church school; (3) chairman of leadership education; (4) superintendent of the children's division of the church school; (5) superintendent of young people's division of the church school; (6) superintendent of the adult

work of the church school; (7) superintendent of missionary education, in cooperation with the department of missions.

3. The department of evangelism is responsible for cultivating an evangelistic spirit within the membership, for sponsoring various evangelistic enterprises, including evangelistic meetings, visitation campaigns, prospect lists, etc., and all such aspects of the church work and life as may properly be designated as evangelistic. This department may be organized into subcommittees to care for its various responsibilities.

4. The department of stewardship, finance and maintenance is responsible for keeping alive within the church membership its stewardship obligations, for supervising the preparation and subscription of the church budgets, and the oversight and upkeep of the church's physical property.

The department of stewardship may organize itself to include: (1) a budget committee composed of the heads of departments of the church; (2) an every-member canvass committee to secure subscriptions to the budget; and (3) a tithers' league committee to organize all the tithers of the church into a tithers' league and to disseminate tithing literature and information to the church. The church treasurer and financial secretary, by virtue of their offices, are members of this department.

The audit of the books of the church treasurer and the financial secretary should be made each year by the chairman of the board of officers of the church.

5. The department of missions, benevolence, and higher education is responsible for promoting the support of missions, benevolence, and higher education of the brotherhood, through the regular church budget, the church school, and other organizations of the church. Included in the personnel of this department should be the executive head of each missionary organization of the church.

6. The department of membership cultivation is responsible for maintaining closest contact with the church membership and for seeing that each member functions effectively in the life of the church. Regular periods of membership visitation by all members of the church should be arranged, as well as groupings of the church membership into districts within the parish for more effective results.

7. The department of the Christian home is responsible for making Christianity central in the home and family life of members of the congregation.

II. Auxiliary Organizations

All organizations of the church are ultimately responsible to the board of officers of the church and should report to the board at regular intervals.

III. Church Cabinet

Some churches find it practical to set up a church cabinet, in which event it usually consists of: (1) the minister as chairman; (2) the chairman of the board of officers; (3) the chairman of the elders and deacons; (4) chairmen of the various departments of the church as delineated in Section I; and (5) the executive head, or representative, of each department, organization, and auxiliary group in the church.

It is the responsibility of the church cabinet to correlate the work of the various departments and organizations of the church and to counsel with the minister in making the program of the church effective. The function of the church cabinet is advisory and not administrative. The church cabinet may meet regularly, or at the call of the minister.

IV. Selection of Departmental Chairmen and Committees

Departmental chairmen may be selected at the beginning of each church year by the minister and chairman of the board of officers of the church. Their selection should be ratified by the board of officers.

The departmental chairmen should meet with the minister and chairman of the board of officers to select all committees for all departments of the church. Their action should be ratified by the board of officers of the church. All special committees should be announced in open meetings of the board of officers of the church.

V. Nominations and Elections

The chairman of the board of officers may appoint a nominating committee to nominate members of the board to replace those whose terms expire. The nominating committee may be composed as follows: an elder whose term is not expiring, a deacon whose term is not expiring, a deaconess whose term is not expiring, and two members of the congregation at large. The nominating committee should be appointed two months before the year closes, to nominate members of the church to fill all vacancies on the board of officers for their respective terms. This committee should make its report at the last regular meeting of the board of officers of the church year, and it should be passed upon by the board.

The election of elders, deacons, deaconesses, and trustees may be held by the congregation at the annual business meeting. An appropriate installation service should be arranged in keeping with the general plan of the church.

The election should always be by ballot. More than enough names to fill vacancies are usually placed in nomination, in which case the congregation should be instructed as to the number for which to vote for each office.

Vacancies occurring on the board of officers between annual meetings may be filled by the board, upon the nominations made by the elders at any regular meeting of the official board. This action should be ratified by the congregation.

VI. Pastoral Relationships

Whenever the congregation is without a minister, it is the responsibility of the chairman of the board of officers to appoint a pulpit committee of five, three men and two women. This committee should communicate with the state secretary to find what ministers are available who would be suitable for their congregation and seek his counsel in securing a consecrated and capable minister. Only one minister should be considered at a time. When the pulpit committee recommends a name to the board of officers, the board should either accept or reject it before considering any other. When a minister is recommended by the committee and their recommendation is adopted by the board, then the congregation should be asked to ratify the action of the board, and the minister should be called on that basis.

The minister may be called for an indefinite period, with the agreement that if he wishes to resign at any time, he will give the church sixty days' notice before leaving the pastorate, and if, for any reason, the church desires a change of ministers, the church board will give the minister sixty days' notice before declaring the office vacant. At the time of the call, a statement in writing should be made about the details of the call, salary, and other relevant matters, and this should be made an item of record on the church books, a copy of which statement should be delivered to the minister.

VII. Financial Budget

A carefully itemized budget should be prepared by the budget committee of the stewardship department. (The budget committee may be composed of the chairmen of the various departments of the church.) The budget should be presented to the board of officers for adoption at its regular meeting two months before the close of the church year. (The chairman of the stewardship department may act as chairman of the budget committee.) The budget, after adoption by the board, should be presented to the congregation for final acceptance. After its approval by the congregation, the budget should then be committed to the stewardship department for the every-member canvass committee to arrange for the details of its subscriptions.

VIII. Rules of Order

When not otherwise specified in these rules of procedure, the board of officers and congregational business meetings should be governed by *Roberts' Rules of Order.*

IX. Order of Business in Board Meetings

The following is suggested as the order of business: (1) devotions; (2) minutes of previous meeting to be read and accepted; (3) minister's report, financial report, and reports of departmental chairmen and heads of auxiliary organizations; (4) unfinished business; (5) new business (no matter should come before the board for immediate action unless some committee or department has considered it and is thus able to make a recommendation about it; new matters, not so considered, may be referred to the proper department or committee); (6) perhaps a study and discussion period of fifteen minutes led by the minister; (7) adjournment, with benediction.

X. Amendments

These rules of procedure may be changed at any regular meeting of the board of officers of the church, provided that the changes proposed are submitted in writing, and further provided that a two-thirds majority of the members present approve the proposed changes.

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